



Scrutiny

18 October 2022

Report of: Councillor Rob Bindloss - Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity

Tourism in the Melton Borough Area

Corporate Priority:	Priority 3: Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton
Relevant Ward Member(s):	All
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council’s Tourism Service to the Scrutiny Committee.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Scrutiny Committee:

2.1 Consider the report and provide comments and feedback for consideration by cabinet

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth is a key priority in the Council’s Corporate Strategy 2020-2024. Tourism is a key economic sector in Melton Borough and Melton Mowbray Town Centre.
- 3.2 This report provides the context and trends of tourism and outlines the resources the Council deploys to undertake a range of activities for support and growth of this key economic sector. It enables the scrutiny Committee to get an overview of the level and effectiveness of service provision, and provide feedback to the Cabinet for future direction.

4 Background

- 4.1 As part of their Workplan, the Scrutiny Committee have requested to review the Council's Tourism Service. This report seeks to provide information to support this review.
- 4.2 For over a decade tourism had been the fastest-growing sector in the UK in terms of employment. In 2019, before the pandemic, Visit Britain forecast that the tourism industry was predicted to grow faster (at 3.8% per year) than the overall UK economy (at 3% per year), much faster than sectors such as manufacturing, construction and retail. Britain would have a tourism industry worth over £257 billion by 2025, just under 10% of UK GDP and supporting almost 3.8 million jobs, which is around 11% of the total UK number. However, Covid-19 has clearly impacted inbound and domestic tourism visits, and the recovery period is likely to take years.
- 4.3 Tourism is a key economic sector for Melton and the town centre. Visitors from the UK, Europe and further afield represent a major opportunity to the business sector in Melton with potential for growth. The tourism industry was fundamentally shut down because of COVID-19 restrictions, which saw the number of overnight stays fall by two third during 2020.
- 4.4 The visitor economy contributes significantly to Melton's overall economy, and in 2019 the value of tourism for Melton was £100 million, supporting 984 FTEs, based on 1.84m visitors. In 2021, 1.52 million visitors contributed £82m to the district economy and supported 740 FTEs.
- 4.5 There is significant recovery since Covid, most recent figures for 2021 saw a 123% increase in visitors and 113% growth in £value versus 2020. There were 0.679m visitors (decline of 63% pre-pandemic) and £0.38m (decline of 62%). These statistics are compiled annually for us by a specialist company and although moving in the right direction, we are not back to pre-covid numbers.
- 4.6 The town centre has held well during the COVID-19 pandemic, helped by high concentration of independent businesses. Footfall has increased 85.5% from 87.3k (August 2021) to 162k (August 2022). The vacancy rate remains static at 5.19, of which is significantly lower than the national average demonstrating confidence in the local high street as well as opportunities for business growth.
- 4.7 Comparing visitor numbers and expenditure in 2019 and 2021 within Greater Leicestershire shows:
- 35.37 million visitors in 2019; 11.89 million 2020; 28.15 million in 2021
 - £1.96 billion in visitor expenditure in 2019; £0.7Bm; £1.63 billion in 2021
- 4.8 Comparing visitor numbers and expenditure in 2019 and 2021 within Melton shows:
- 1.84 million visitors in 2019; 0.68 million 2020; 1.52 million in 2021
 - £100.48 million in visitor expenditure in 2019; £38.6m; £82.24 million in 2021
- 4.9 Tourism is a diverse agenda and requires an extended outreach to achieve success at regional, national and international level. The Council works with a multitude of partners to benefit from the expertise and knowledge of the sector. A mutual beneficial relationship has been developed with the Place Marketing Organisation (PMO) for Leicester and Leicestershire which has increased Melton's exposure to a wider audience feeding into several regional and national campaigns.

- 4.10 The Leicestershire wide District Council Tourism Officers Group meets quarterly to share best practice and raise awareness about the activities carried out by each district.
- 4.11 Melton BID successfully promotes the town centre to local businesses and residents. The Council works closely with the BID to provide support for enhancement of town centre, promotion of events and businesses and improving the public realm to increase footfall and spend in the economy.
- 4.12 In addition to delivering tourism related activities, the Council works with partner organisations to support leisure, retail and tourism related businesses in exploring funding opportunities, helping with access to skilled workforce, extending access to new audiences and supporting business growth.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Strategy supports tourism activities to deliver economic growth. The Regeneration service within the Growth & Regeneration directorate was created in 2018 to create a focus on economic development, town centre, tourism and events. The Senior Tourism and Events development Officer post was created in December 2021 to focus on delivery of tourism and event activities along with wider place promotion of the borough. A structure chart for the service is attached in Appendix A.
- 5.2 Tourism activities are intrinsically linked with development of website, economic development, town centre enhancement, place promotion and marketing, inward investment and development of regeneration projects such as leisure centres, markets, commercial units on cattle market, Christmas lights, food festivals and so on. It is not possible to assign the delivery of activities to one individual or team. The whole regeneration service team works closely with the Communications team to deliver tourism objectives and promote Melton as a place to live, visit and invest in.
- 5.3 Set out below is an overview of the key activities and projects delivered to date to outline the Council's commitment to supporting the tourism economy.

5.4 Place branding and Place Promotion:

5.4.1 Destination Management Plan for Melton (2018)

Melton Borough council worked with a range of stakeholders including private sector businesses and public sector partners to revisit the 'Melton brand' and perception of Melton as a place to live, visit and invest in. A new refreshed approach to place branding was agreed by the partners to promote Melton to local, regional and national audiences considering the changing trends, demographics and needs for future generations. A coherent narrative about Melton being the 'rural capital of food' was developed as part of Melton Story. The Destination Management Plan was prepared to provide direction for a strategic, innovative and joined up framework for future developments and investments in place promotion and continues to inform our approach to place marketing, as can be seen from the design for the recent stand at the group tourism and leisure show (further info in section 5.8.3). Melton Place Board was created to co-ordinate actions by all partners and oversee the delivery of the vision. The Plan aligns with the wider strategic objectives of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) and County Council (LCC) and supports the delivery of Melton's strategic priorities and Growth Plan.

5.4.2 Discover Melton website (2021)

Council's corporate priority 3 "Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton" specifically focuses on "Launch the Discover Melton brand, website and supporting events

programme”. The new website was launched in August 2021 by the MP through an online event attended by 60 local stakeholders and partners. The website has an inclusive diverse offering, providing range of information for visitors, residents and for businesses to invest in Melton. The website aims to encourage people to visit Melton, live in Melton and for businesses to invest in Melton. Development of place-based website includes 3 areas of focus under the categories Live, Visit and Invest. The site is hosted on a third-party platform, which includes a supported package, whereby the website gets backed up daily, core WordPress updates and updates to the plug-ins used by the website are managed. The package includes full security and malware scans. The cost of the website was £18,290.

Day to day development, content management and all updates are all managed in-house by the Council. The contents are continually reviewed and updated by the team. There are over 90 attractions listed on the website currently. There is functionality on the website for businesses to submit a listing by completing an integrated form. The content is reviewed prior to publishing. Permission must be granted by business owners to add to the listing directory. Data shows that the reach of the website is growing with year-on-year comparisons highlighting a positive trend. The site has attracted over 77,000 website visits, with 33,000 users. The most visited pages ‘Upcoming Events’ page followed by attractions listing directory. The Council pays a monthly fee £10 for hosting, plus the maintenance fee of £79 per month plus VAT.

5.4.3 Development and launch of Stockyard branding

To reinforce Melton’s position as the ‘rural capital of food’ the Council has worked with Gillstream and occupying businesses at the cattle market to develop the Stockyard branding differentiating the livestock market from other tourism, retail and leisure related activities on the south of the site. This was launched in April 2022. Currently working with the College, Leicestershire Promotions and local businesses to promote joined activities involving food and drink production demonstrations for groups of people visiting Melton Mowbray town centre. A food producers’ network event is being organised to bring together over 50 producers from the wider region to develop a local community to encourage and support growth amongst food producers in line with our aspirations for the wider stockyard project in turning it into a destination/ attraction in its own right over the next 5-10 years. The cost for branding was £9825 funded from the Business Rates Pool funding by LLEP.

5.5 Events Promotion and Organisation

5.5.1 Discover Melton provides a free Events listing service, populating an expansive calendar of what’s happening within borough of Melton. Over 200 events have been published through the online events calendar since the launch in July 2021. All event organisers across Melton can request their event is included in this schedule either through directly contacting the tourism officer or through a dedicated Discover Melton inbox. To date, no events have ever been refused. The type of events ranges from food and drink festivals, Melton Bid and Town Estates events, large scale events at Belvoir Castle to Burrough Jazz, War Grave Tours and Cream Teas at St John’s Church Garden, Thorpe End. Events across the Borough are researched by the officer on a weekly basis and event owners are proactively engaged with a request to promote their events should we find any that are not currently on the site, and to also raise awareness of the free service.

In partnership with Melton BID, the Council paid for an advert in Leicestershire Great Days Out Guide to promote events in the town centre. The Council is a key sponsor for the

British Pie Awards organised by the Melton Mowbray Pork Pie Association as well as the Leicestershire Tourism and Hospitality Awards organised by Leicestershire Promotions. Approximately 1000 pies were entered in the award competition from across the country. These awards attract regional and national media coverage raising Melton's profile. All events on the Town Centre Events Guide produced by Melton BID are published and promoted through the Discover Melton website. The Council pays for all road closures for all events in town centre on annual basis.

5.5.2 **Food Festivals and Music Festivals**

Melton is renowned for its food festivals including Choc Fest, the Artisan Cheese Fair, Pie Fest and East Midlands Food Festival attracting approximately 30,000 visitors to Melton Mowbray Town Centre every year. The Council supports the organisation, planning, operation and promotion of the events by working closely with the event organisers. The Council proactively supports health and safety risk management on site, public health regulations, licencing of the event, road closures, planning and enforcement issues, sales and promotion of the events through press releases, social media posts, listing on the website and adverts in event guides. The Council also supports the safe operation of Noisily Festival and Forbidden Forest Music Festivals in the Vale of Belvoir which bring in approximately 30,000 visitors to the borough.

5.5.3 **Queens Jubilee celebrations**

The Council coordinated the promotion and communication of all activities taking place throughout the borough over the jubilee weekend. The Council offered £7k of community grants to organisations wishing to organise events for the jubilee weekend. Activities of several partners were supported such as the DATR Beacon lightening, Melton in Bloom activity, the Jubilee tree planting and willow arch and events at the Stockyard. Working with the Democratic Services team the Regen team organised the planning, and operation of the Mayors concert with a call for volunteers to help run the event on the day. The Council sponsored Melton Times Jubilee 8-page supplement providing front page banner and back page advert which promoted all events in Melton over the Jubilee weekend to enable signposting between events, maximise visitors and create movement between the town and rural events where appropriate. The regulatory team supported the events with relevant licencing, road closures and health and safety check to ensure smooth operation on the day. The events were promoted on the Discover Melton website as well as the social media channels of the Council. The cost for the event was £1619.42, excluding staff time and internal printing. Please note suppliers provided services at cost price.

5.5.4 **Christmas**

Through a service level agreement (SLA) with the BID, the Council pays the BID up to £5000 for the delivery of the event to support businesses during this festive period. The event is well attended by Melton residents and is a key feature of the festive calendar in Melton. The Council is responsible for installing the Christmas tree and lighting in the town centre. In the run up to Christmas the team ensures essential infrastructure tests and servicing are undertaken. An application of a S178 Licence for attachments on or above the highway from Leicestershire County Council is made every year. These include pull testing on all anchor points for over streetlights, obtaining electrical test certificates from western power and non-destruct testing on lampposts and other columns used to hold Christmas lighting. The three-year contract for the festive lighting scheme has been now reprocured in compliance with the contract procedure rules, and all necessary due diligence has been carried out. The value of the new contract is £22,583.75 per year for

the scheme hire, install and removal of lights after the event. Total 5-year contract value up to £132,918.75 (including electric tests and fixing).

5.6 Production of guides and trails

5.6.1 Discover Melton Guide (2020) and Melton Food and Drinks Guide

The Council funded the preparation and printing of these guides through Leicestershire Promotions. Approximately 15,000 copies were distributed after the 2020 lockdown across Leicestershire, Rutland & Northamptonshire to support tourism and leisure providers ranging from accommodation providers, attractions, theatres, museums, garden centres, cafes, library's through to festivals and stately homes. Production cost for the Discover Melton Guide was £2,369.00 and £700 to distribute.

5.6.2 Borough-wide Discover Melton Visitor Map (2022)

A borough wide attractions map is created to promote a range of visitor attractions in Melton. This was done in house, designed using external marketing agency. It was printed by an external contractor with a digital version available on the website where more information can be found on things to do in Melton. The map features 75 attractions and accommodation. 5000 copies have been printed and the distribution area covers Melton and neighbouring districts such as Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, targeting visitor attractions, libraries camp sites, caravan parks, hotels, Bed & Breakfasts, museums, cafes and garden centres in the local area, as well as Leicester Visitor Centre. The total cost for design, printing and distribution of these maps is £5000. The hardcopy of this map has a QR code attached to it which when scanned take you through to the online version consisting of over 90 attractions which is updated on a weekly basis. The hard copy map will be reviewed to a yearly basis to ensure it stays as up to date as possible

5.6.3 Heritage Guide

A renewed Heritage Guide replacing the outdated 2013 leaflet is produced by the Council. The redesign reflects the current Melton branding guidelines and updated contents agreed and approved by the County Council Local Museums Officer with Input from Arthur Payne and John McQuaid, both very knowledgeable local historians. 20,000 copies were printed and distributed across the district and neighbouring areas in April 2022. A digital version is on the website. The cost of this work was £8k funded through Welcome Back grant funding.

5.6.4 Royal Melton trail

A special tab is created on the Discover Melton website with a click through to Royal Melton website which includes stories promoting royal connections of Melton and a trail. Further development is planned to produce a guide, and signage with QR codes to be funded from the prospective UKSPF funding.

5.7 Town Centre Enhancement

5.7.1 Town Centre Vision

The Council has prepared town centre vision and action plan by working closely with a range of town centre stakeholders. Enhancing visitor experience through culture, heritage, leisure, retail and tourism is a key priority identified in the vision document. The action plan includes a range of activities to support place branding, promotion and marketing. The Council has submitted a funding bid for £14m to the Government for the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to improve cultural and tourism offer in Melton Mowbray.

5.7.2 Street furniture and signage

As an extension of the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSS), The Council received £90,478 for the Welcome Back Fund in May 2020. The Council worked with the town centre stakeholders including the Business Improvement District (BID) board and Melton Mowbray Town Estate (MMTE) for a wide-ranging interventions making the town centre more attractive and safe for visitors. The street furniture and signage elements went through a clean and repaint makeover. Bike parking, planters, seating and signage were installed in Melton Mowbray town centre as well as in the centre of Bottesford.

5.7.3 Town Centre Visitor Mapping Panels

Melton Borough Council recognised the need to provide up to date information for tourists visiting the town and identified that several of the wooden signs are damaged. Through the Welcome Back Fund, five key locations were identified including three town's car parks, Market Place and at the top of Nottingham Street. New 3D Town Centre map created with final installation delivered end of March 2022. The cost for this work was £24,985 funded through Welcome Back grant funding.

5.7.4 Launch of social media channels and campaigns

Engaged services of a local Melton business to create a three-month campaign to kick start and optimise the Discover Melton social media profiles. 'Faces behind the places' campaign ran January to March 2022 with the aim to encourage visitors to shop in Melton, showcasing our independent businesses and their amazing business owners. Due to the success of this activity, the campaign was extended in May with a borough wide focus on supporting local attractions, farm shops & places to stay. The campaign was highly successful generating over 538 likes on facebook with 746 followers. The highest level of engagement was generated through stories with video content. Melton Country Park generated 615 views and launch of the Stockyard 1000. On Instagram it had 428 followers, reels content generates higher engagement than standard posts. Long Clawson Diary generated 3,441 views and Makers Market 3,604. The cost for this work including photography was £2400 funded through Welcome Back grant funding.

5.8 Partnership Working

5.8.1 Promotion of group travel and cross-promotion of Melton's offer:

Melton Mowbray is a key day time destination for group travel. With an estimated of 5 weekly coaches. The Council works closely with Leicestershire Promotions (LPL) whose key purpose is to implement and manage the growth of group travel plan, contacting 300 group travel organisers through eblasts, undertaking PR campaign, as well as develop and promote gourmet breaks. Examples of coverage can be found here

<https://www.greatdays.co.uk/tour/piefest-group-tour/>

<https://www.greatdays.co.uk/tour/eat-drink-and-be-melton/>

5.8.2 Bookable group experiences

Supported and funded by the Council, Leicestershire Promotions has developed new online content and new groups guide that was launched in 2021. New experiences available to groups to book include:

- The 'History of Melton Mowbray Pork Pies' experience and a technology driven tutored Pork Pie making session at St Mary's Church.

- The ‘School of Rural Food’ where guests will be able to undertake two-day masterclasses on a range of baking specialities.
- Origins of ‘Painting the Town Red’ and ‘The Kings of King Street’ among other stories, bookable through Dickinson & Morris.

The Council is working with LPL to organise a familiarisation trip around Melton and over 300 trade businesses have been contacted along with operators and trade organisers to register for the event in Spring 2023. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness about the Melton offer among special interest private tour groups and to encourage businesses to network with one another to create offers that drive extended stays and higher spend in the area.

5.8.3 **Group Leisure & Travel Show (GLTS) at Milton Keynes Marshall Arena**

This is the first time the council has exhibited at the show in partnership with Visit Harborough and Visit Leicester. The event is the biggest and best show for Group Travel and Coach Tourism. The PMO has created a county wide highly visual promotional stand based on the Uncover Story theme, with printed brochures aimed at group organisers. Leading up to the event, a sponsored feature ran inside the September issue of the GLTS magazine. A half page advert was placed in Coaching Venues & Excursions Guide published in October 2022. The event was attended by over 150 exhibitors and well represented by larger ‘Visit’ Destination organisations such as Visit Bath, Exeter, Gloucestershire, Isle of Wight, and The Lake District. This was a great brand building opportunity to raise the profile for Melton. Approximately 85 leads have been added to the database. The cost for organising and attending this event was £2000.

5.8.4 **Travel Trade Guide for Leicester & Leicestershire**

A new online travel guide was launched in March 2022. The Leicestershire Directory was incorporated into a wider trade directory for the Midlands and promoted in partnership with Shakespeare’s England and the West Midlands Growth Company, both in the UK and internationally. Developed by Place Marketing Organisation (PMO), officers at MBC contacted partners and provided featured itineraries to raise the profile for Melton under the section ‘Taste the Place’. The directory was taken to Explore GB Virtual, an event arranged by Visit Britain to connect international trade buyers to UK destinations by the place marketing team. The guide has been updated and taken to Group Leisure & Travel Show in October in printed format. Melton benefits from all the promotional activity around the directory. Tourism service will work with partners to expand Melton’s offering for 2023.

5.8.5 **Regional and National Campaigns for Targeted Promotion with PMO:**

Key to the successful delivery of tourism promotion into Melton has been how well we have been able to work with key partners strategically to best represent Melton in key regional and national promotion campaigns. To this means the Council has worked very closely with the Place Marketing Organisation (PMO) to gain significant sight on Melton as a place through the following campaigns. PMO actively engage with several agencies to communicate the tourism offering to widen the audience reach.

5.8.6 **National press visit for Belvoir Castle:**

Through an agency working with national travel journalists and publications including Sunday Times Ireland visited Belvoir Castle. Itineraries were prepared following approaches from Daily Mail, The Sun, travel bloggers, group travel focused publications. The January 2022 issue of BRITAIN magazine, the official glossy magazine of Visit

Britain/Visit England, included a 11-page feature on Leicestershire. Melton had a great profile throughout, particularly highlighting its food and drink offer.

5.8.7 **Social Media Campaign:**

Engaged an agency running paid social media campaigns to reach identified target audiences. This work generated 18,378 visits to Visit Leicester website and 7,485 people went on to visit an attraction website. Paid social media campaign extended campaign reach by 1,500% increase on our organic posts. Active engagement with local influencers and travel bloggers has been undertaken. The campaign inspired itineraries, opening routes to tens of thousands of potential customers. Influencers such as krista.the.explorer (58,200), Cool As Leicester (23,200 followers) and Jumpintothemap (9,800 followers) got engaged actively in promoting the region. Campaign shared with visit Britain to extend reach and include in their national campaigns such as #EscapeTheEveryday, Welcome to Another Side of Britain.

5.8.8 **Uncover the Story Campaign for Melton**

Developed by Visit Leicester in partnership with the Council and launched in July 2021 the aim was to create a unique brand for Leicester and Leicestershire as a distinct tourist destination. As part of this campaign five stories were developed for Melton to fit within the wider Uncover the Story campaign. These stories can be found on Discover Melton website. They are-

- Royal Connections,
- Painting the town Red,
- Town of Pies,
- Scalford Country House,
- Belvoir Castle.

A further three new stories were developed for summer 2022 relating to

- 'Unique Rural Stays' including Farm Stays, Glamping, camping, B&Bs on farms – focussing on the Rural Capital of Food & Drink;
- Stapleford Park hotel;
- A “dairy” story– covering the production of cheese, ice cream and milk in Melton.

Campaign videos are also created by the PMO to increase engagement, one of which is focus on our market towns with an edited version for Melton. Both featured on Discover Melton. <https://discovermelton.com/visit/>.

5.8.9 **Fitcation Campaign**

In preparation for the summer's Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, there was an opportunity to develop visitor experiences and taster challenges to promote in the run up to the games. Visit Leicester in partnership with Active Together developed Fitcation campaign to inspire and encourage visitors and groups to book a short break and try out a new sport, a fun family activity with the family or a thrill-seeking challenge. The Council approached several activity providers that we felt could offer a strong product, collating information for the Leicestershire destination-wide Fit-cation campaign. Featured 35 bookable activities and challenges, including 6 activity providers in the Borough of Melton - Skydive Langer and Buckminster Gliding Club – Adrenalin Escapes, Eye Kettleby Lakes

and Race Hub – Sporting Escapes, Ferneley’s Diary Farm Crazy Golf and Sysonby Acres Footgolf – Family Escapes.

The PR activity was widened to include engaging with national travel journalists to pitch itinerary and feature ideas, co-ordinate media and digital influencer familiarisation visits. Produced series of themed press releases, news stories, media pitches, articles and blogs for national media. Lobby for national engagement opportunities with VisitBritain/VisitEngland.

5.8.10 The benefits of such cohesive destinations marketing campaigns for Melton and ongoing partnership with Place Marketing team for Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council are many. The campaigns are fully funded by Place Marketing team - microsite, video, social media and PR/editorial at no significant ongoing cost or commitment to Melton Borough Council. Melton’s support is predominately through small contributions for activities we directly benefit from (attendance at tourism expos) and officer time. The campaigns have been a way to ‘package up’ and communicate our tourism offer and place. The benefits include:

- Created a strong, distinctive & visible destination and place profile for Melton.
- Imaginative way to ‘repackage’ our tourism offer Unite partners and providers through a cohesive brand campaign
- Puts Melton on the map as a great place for tourists to visit and stay
- Stories help make an authentic and emotive connection between the visitor and place
- Change perceptions and build brand awareness of a wider offer for Melton – more than pork pies and cheese
- Focused on stories behind the attractions to make them more distinctive and intriguing
- Promoted the wider borough as a short break destination with a wider target audience reach
- Aligned with the Leicestershire wide Tourism Growth Plan to create a strong, distinctive, and visible destination
- Supports the delivery of Melton’s strategic priorities and Growth Plan
- Unite partners and providers through a cohesive brand campaign.

5.9 **Focus and priorities for tourism support going forward**

5.9.1 As demonstrated in this report, the Council delivers a diverse range of activities to support tourism and attract more visitors in the borough. The challenges this sector is facing today are enormous. The visitor numbers have increased significantly post COVID, but they are still not at pre-COVID level. Now with rise in energy costs and the ‘cost of living’ crisis, the sector faces a new set of challenges. The focus for the Council in the next few months will be to maintain the level of activities and retain the positive trend of growth in tourism. The Council has submitted an investment plan to the Government for securing the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) which includes a range of activities to support the growth of tourism related activities.

5.9.2 The following are the key areas of attention and resource allocation in the next few years going forward:

- Continue to work with local and regional partners for extending the area of influence by supporting and promoting campaigns, group travels, leisure facilities, events and festivals.
- Explore investment in leisure and tourism infrastructure to enable more day visits as well as overnight stays.
- Support hotel and B&B operators to improve the quality of offer in appropriate locations.
- Adapt key account management approach to work closely with key attractions such as Belvoir Castle and Twinlakes.
- Invest in Inward Investment resources and produce promotional investment literature.
- Further develop and better promote Discover Melton brand and website, looking at the viability of providing bookable offers & strengthen clubs/groups directory within 'live' section. Ensure the content is attractive and accessible to all, specifically for groups such as young people.
- Continue activities for awareness raising campaign and stronger digital visibility through paid advertising on social media channels.
- Invest in additional in-house communications/ marketing resource to enable additional place marketing and promotion.
- Contribute to the 'Taste the Place' and 'Green Tourism' campaigns planned by the Place Marketing Organisation.
- Consider community grants support for cultural/ arts and heritage based events or activities.
- Look to support tourism and hospitality attractions or businesses in the area through developing a database of facilities that could be of interest to film/TV/Independent productions and work to showcase these to location scouts.
- Explore future viability of town centre street market by commissioning experts to undertake a critical appraisal of street market provision in the town.
- Explore strategic and sustainable development options for Bell Centre and/or key sites within wider surrounding town centre area, working proactively with landowners as appropriate to create quality offer and increase footfall.
- Invest in environmental maintenance team to enable more proactive improvements and support to Melton in Bloom and other key community partners in raising attractiveness and greening of the town centre.
- Work with Leicestershire County Council to improve signage at gateway locations to increase visibility of Melton's offer.
- Invest in CCTV to make Melton a safe place for visitors and businesses.
- Engage with businesses to increase compliance to food safety, health and safety and other regulatory requirements to increase visitor confidence.
- Work with partners to deliver the activities identified in the town centre action plan where funding is sourced.
- Engage with businesses and College to understand the needs of the sector and maintain the supply of skilled workforce.
- Engage with national and regional media and explore new avenues for promotion such as the Creative England's 'Filming in England' opportunity.

- Deliver UKSPF and REPF programmes on behalf of the council.
- Subject to successful outcome, deliver the Levelling up fund in Melton borough, ensuring compliance with government conditions and working with submission partners such as Gillstream and SMB group to ensure effective delivery and promotion to enhance and benefit the tourism offer in Melton
- Look to deliver a Tourism forum for the borough to support continued growth in the area and raise awareness of potential areas for collaboration and also opportunities that are available that the tourism sector will be able to benefit from.

5.9.3 As a result of these above mentioned work, the tourism sector in Melton will benefit significantly and will be better prepared to face the challenges it will face over the coming years as well as exploit the opportunities that will arise

6 Options Considered

6.1 The report was requested by Scrutiny as part of the workplan and therefore no alternative options have been considered.

7 Consultation

7.1 No consultation has been undertaken as part of this report

7.2 Members have been given the following opportunities to inform some of the tourism projects that have been delivered:

- i) All members briefing on strategic development for tourism- December 2020
- ii) Discover Melton launch webinar- July 2021
- iii) Members briefing on town centre visioning- August 2021
- iv) Request to all members for any tourism businesses they may be aware of that can be included on the website or on the hard copy map (21st October 2021).
- v) Members sessions on developing UKSPF and importance of tourism which has led to significant funding has been allocated to tourism for delivery of the next 2/3 years
- vi) Member session on developing LUF to create a destination offer in the town with the view to increase tourism into the area
- vii) Members session on Town Centre vision to highlight priorities around town centre enhancement and prioritisation of projects.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

8.1 Any feedback will be considered as part of the process for developing priorities within the services future workplans

9 Financial Implications

9.1 Not including staff costs, the direct service budget for tourism activities for 2022-23 is £24,360. The direct salary budget for 2022-23 for the regeneration team (excluding the regeneration manager post) is £117,790. In addition, other services will contribute to the delivery of the service

	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Actual	2022-23 Budget
Tourism activities	£41,275	£65,110	£24,360

Salaries (excluding service manager post)	£73,281	£112,703	£117,790
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9.2 All expected programmes to be delivered will either be funded directly through the direct tourism budget spend or will be funded by partners with MBC either making a contribution through staff time or a small contribution via the direct budget.

9.3 From October/ November 2022 MBC are expecting to receive confirmation from the government in regards to the success of the UKSPF investment plan and the funding we can begin to draw down to support a multitude of activities within the council. One of the key areas we are looking to support through this is tourism and wider place marketing activity to attract both tourism and inward investment.

9.4 Once approved the UKSPF programme will provide the following additional amounts towards tourism or tourism related activity. This will be to help deliver of most of the items in section 5.9.2:

2022/23 - £11k

2023/24 - £48k

2024/25 - £105k

9.5 In addition to this the regeneration team will be responsible for delivering what will likely be a grant capital grant scheme for Melton Boroughs Local Businesses as a result of the recently announced £400,000 capital allocation to MBC through the REPF. This scheme will run from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2025 and will require significant resource to ensure its successful delivery. Whilst not limited to tourism businesses some of the key areas identified to date by national criteria and through ongoing local consultation will be to support tourism and hospitality related businesses.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from the report as it is a report for information purposes and to seek feedback from the Scrutiny Committee.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Deputy Monitoring Officer 10.10.22

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

11.1 N/A

12 Community Safety Implications

12.1 N/A

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 N/A

14 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
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1	Reduction in base line budget for tourism services leads to reduction in ability to delivery tourism activity in the area	Low	Marginal	
2	Additional workloads from funding secured via the UKSPF fund and responsibility for the REPF fund cause significant service pressures due to lack of officer resource to delivery on top of existing day to day activity	High	Marginal	
3	Uncertainty in the market and wider economy having significant impact on this sector.	Significant	Critical	

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High		2		
	4 Significant			3	
	3 Low		1		
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Service will continue to seek external funding opportunities to ensure effective delivery of a tourism service is able to be maintained. The service will continue to work with partners to ensure we maximise opportunities and efficiencies to increase Melton's tourism footprint through the work out partners already undertake
2	Work is underway to liaise with neighbouring authorities to look to pool administrative resources related to the UKSPF to enable shared post to be created and increase resource available to the LA for UKSPF related initiatives. UKSPF proposal itself identifies additional comms related capacity to support place marketing drive to release regen service offices to continue their focus on support businesses and work with partners to increase tourism offer in the area
3	The extensive level of activity planned with UKSPF funding will help mitigate some of the negative impact.

15 Background Papers

15.1 None

16 Appendices

Appendix A: Regeneration service chart

Report Author:	Lee Byrne , Regeneration Manager
Report Author Contact Details:	01664 502589 LByrne@melton.gov.uk
Chief Officer Responsible:	Pranali Parikh , Director for Growth and Regeneration
Chief Officer Contact Details:	01664 504321 PParikh@melton.gov.uk