

Report To:	CABINET
Date:	18TH NOVEMBER 2024
Heading:	DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
Executive Lead Member:	CLLR CHRISTOPER HUSKINSON, EXECUTIVE LEAD MEMBER FOR LEISURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING
Ward/s:	ALL WARDS
Key Decision:	Yes
Subject to Call-In:	Yes

Purpose of Report

To agree the draft Destination Management Plan to develop the visitor economy, concentrating efforts on key target markets, enhancing our events programme and working closely across the business and public sector.

Recommendation

1. To approve the draft Destination Management Plan which sets out a clear plan to develop the visitor economy and enhance our events programme.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

1. To further develop Ashfield as a visitor destination for residents and visitors enhancing and growing the visitor economy.
2. To ensure delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan for Economic Growth and Place developing the visitor economy, arts and culture as a priority.
3. There is the potential to generate spend and to support local businesses and create jobs.
4. To enhance the quality of life for our residents through delivery of free to access and low-cost activities / events and facilities.

Alternative Options Considered

1. Not to agree the adoption of the Destination Management Plan. **Not Recommended;** This would mean there would be no strategy going forward.

Detailed Information

The Council and Discover Ashfield partners have worked with specialist consultants to develop a Destination Management Plan (DMP) for the District. The DMP sets out a strategic approach for the next three years and how we will work together to make the most of the exciting developments that are happening across Ashfield.

In the next two years over £20 million is being invested in the District's visitor economy in a range of projects including the Sherwood Observatory, Science Discovery Centre & Planetarium, Cornerstone Theatre, King's Mill Reservoir and water sports centre, Fox Street/ Portland Square, Sutton - pop-up food space and events, Walking and cycling route improvements, St Mary's Magdalene Church visitor experience in Hucknall and the Visitor Digital offer.

We have a good base to build on, with strong partnerships in place through Discover Ashfield. The plan is the outcome of conversations with a range of people from across Ashfield. It sets out a clear path for us to develop the visitor economy, concentrating our efforts on key target markets, enhancing our events programme and working more closely across businesses and the public sector.

The plan gives an overview of the current position, the strengths, challenges, needs and opportunities and the priorities for developing the visitor economy. The aims and actions are divided into the following two areas:

1. Immediate Priorities

Discover Your Doorstep - Getting residents engaged in the District to support community cohesion, levels of health and wellbeing and civic pride.

Existing (and enhanced) Events - an opportunity to increase the profile and attendance of council and partner events through quality and varied programming at the events, helping to improve pride in the district.

2. Longer Term Priorities

The Plan identifies five main themes for development:

Ashfield Adventures – promoting the range of cycling and walking trails, and outdoor sports activities, modern leisure centres, water sports and high ropes at Kings Mill, focusing on the opportunities for car free visiting at key sites and links with neighbouring districts. Development work could include site and route improvements at Teversal and Brierley Forest Park to create an Ashfield Circular cycle route. This could also be supported by a range of sports participation events e.g. trail cycling, triathlon etc.

Group and Education - with the Sherwood Observatory, King's Mill facilities and the Woodland Adventure Zone at Portland College offering experiences not available in surrounding areas, this is where we excel, particularly for education groups.

As the new investments and facilities develop, there is a potential opportunity to look at joint marketing, targeting education and group markets. Using our established connections with customers, schools, voluntary and community groups we can develop site itineraries of our offers.

Our History Our Culture - we have a rich and distinctive heritage that is part of our sense of place and its celebration is a key part of our civic pride, and we have interesting stories to tell the world. We need to bring this history more to life which can partly be achieved through the development of key sites across our District. This could, alongside our website, be built into sites and routes to help encourage visitor movement for example, Hucknall and Teversal. Key components could include Byron, Ada Lovelace, DH Lawrence and complimenting this we could look to create public art trails around Silverhill, Teversal and Brierley. Softer elements such as guided tours can be promoted through our website and support events.

New Events - in addition to continuing to expand our existing events programme there are significant opportunities for new events to strengthen the programme but also reinforce some of our themes (Ashfield Adventures, Our History Our Culture). With significant funding from the Arts Council which will go towards the delivery of a sustainable programme of events and engagement in the arts.

There is an opportunity to extend the existing events programme with a music event programme across Hucknall, Sutton and Kirkby with themed live music performances in each area, potentially with a competitive element with the winners having the opportunity to play at The Ashfield Show.

Larger scale themed music festivals could also be developed for example: Regional Folk / Country Music Festival or a Country Music Festival.

Mass Participation sports / wellbeing events – Our outdoor recreational areas could be utilised to develop a series of mass participation sports events. There is an opportunity to develop a range of small, resident focused, sports and wellbeing events that have the potential to build into larger scale mass participation events that could act as positive drivers for the visitor economy.

Summary

Beyond Ashfield, we recognise that we have significant synergies and opportunities with our neighbours, particularly Mansfield and Bolsover, and we will continue to explore delivery options especially around recreational route development.

Working more closely within the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and with Visit Nottinghamshire is also a huge opportunity for us and one that will become more important in the medium term as our new products come on stream. The East Midlands County Combined Authority (EMCCA) provides opportunities for greater collaboration across the wider Nottinghamshire/ Derbyshire area, with the visitor economy identified as a priority for EMCCA.

Within the Discover Ashfield framework, we will look to develop working arrangements and groups to drive the visitor economy and delivery of the DMP. We will develop a wider Visitor Economy Group and consider subgroups for the Ashfield Adventures and Group and Education themes.

Implications

Corporate Plan: The Destination Management Plan aligns with the Economic Growth and Place theme within the ADC Corporate Plan (2024-2027) by developing existing and new assets, delivering an events programme and supporting arts organisations.

Legal:

There are no legal issues identified in the report. [RLD 04/10/2024]

Finance: Budget has been allocated as per below. [AVP 09/10/2024]

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	There is £48,000 allocated within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	No implications
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	No implications

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
Partnership delivery work with visitor centres and partners.	We have strong relationships with visitor centres and partners from previous work and there is a definite need for visitor economy and cultural events in the District.
Sponsorship and funding resourcing for events.	The events provider has been appointed and work can be done with partners for event sponsorship and fundraising.

Human Resources:

There are no direct HR implications contained in the report in relation to the report.

Environmental/Sustainability

Not applicable for this report.

Equalities:

No issues identified for this report.

Other Implications:

Not applicable.

Reason(s) for Urgency

Not applicable.

Reason(s) for Exemption

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Draft Destination Management Plan

Report Author and Contact Officer

Hollie Maxwell-Smith

Discover Ashfield Lead

Hollie.maxwell-smith@ashfield.gov.uk

07826 921211

Sponsoring Director

John Bennett

Executive Director – Place

john.bennett@ashfield.gov.uk