

Subject: Culture and Tourism Strategy – Update

Report to: Economic Development Committee – 1st April 2019

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Cultural

SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- (a) Note the work undertaken to date on a Culture and Tourism Strategy for the borough of Great Yarmouth including the involvement of many of the stakeholder organisations in the business and community sector.
- (b) Review and provide comment on the observations and emerging key themes for the 10-year Strategy.
- (c) Note the development of a consortium bid for Great Yarmouth in relation to the Arts Council England Strategic Fund, *Creative People and Places*, which if successful, will contribute to the delivery of the Strategy's action plan.
- (d) Endorse the emerging place-based approach and request officers develop a forward-thinking delivery plan and place-based brand to support the vision within the new Culture and Tourism Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The council is in the process of developing its vision and ambition as part of a new 10-year Culture and Tourism Strategy that encapsulates the borough's long and respected heritage. The aim being to blend and showcase the many art-based entertainment and performance specialisms that exist across the borough to ensure that as a holiday destination and place to visit, Great Yarmouth borough continues to appeal to a variety of visitors, attract investment and spend from across the UK and beyond. Equally the new Strategy must ensure local people and businesses feel connected to and benefit from living and working in a vibrant place with a strong sense of its own story. This work supports the corporate priority of:
- 1.2 **Tourism, Culture and Heritage** - achieving national recognition for the borough's extensive heritage will act as a big stimulus to attracting new visitors and providing more upmarket attractions. The seasonal nature of the sector will be extended with the tourism offer being developed to all year-round attractions. We will seek to create a more coordinated approach to major events and attractions across business, museums, arts and performance venues and spaces working closely with the Greater Yarmouth Tourism and Business Improvement Area company. This should create a stronger sense of place and support targeted promotion.
- 1.3 To achieve this aim, the council has been working collaboratively with a range of key partners and engaging with local people about what is important to them in terms of entertainment, creativity and a sense of place.

1.4 In latter part of 2018, workshops were held with stakeholders as part of the discovery phase of this work. Members will recall the emerging issues from these sessions were:

- The need to develop a place-based brand for borough of Great Yarmouth, to include Greater Yarmouth, heritage and the wider demographics of the borough as an area
- Further improvement and showcasing of our heritage assets with active preservation of our heritage assets
- The need to showcase the Broads within Great Yarmouth
- The need to build a sense of community pride
- The proposition of building on a track record of festivals and events
- Maintenance and enhancement of existing assets e.g. clean streets and beaches
- Continue to work towards extending the season further to make it a true all year round offer for tourism
- The development of an evening economy
- It was recognised that the borough's offer must be inclusive to all: businesses, residents, local communities and visitors
- That joined-up partnership working is key, strengthened relationships with all stakeholders and work with local people to improve their pride in the Borough

2. PLACE-BASED APPROACH

2.1 Since last update to the Committee the council commissioned the agency 'thinking place' to help shape a place-based approach our 'story'. As part of this commission, engagement work has been undertaken via a series of interviews, focus groups, online public surveys, and liaison with the place leaders on the Cultural Board.

2.2 Comments and views have been received from business leaders, community organisations, councillors, members of the public and younger people in terms of what makes Great Yarmouth borough a special place, what are its strengths, weaknesses and importantly, what are the borough's opportunities to enable it to stand-out from the crowd in terms of a positive national profile to attract people to want to live, work and play in the borough.

2.3 This research work and any emerging themes will culminate in a place-based brand which it is hoped, will be endorsed and adopted by organisations in leadership roles throughout the geographic area to attract more spend, greater investment and promote a vibrant place to visit.

2.4 A summary of some of the emerging observations from this discovery research which will help inform the Culture and Tourism Strategy and a place-based brand are set out below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The borough of Great Yarmouth has a long and respected track record in performance and entertainment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a prevalence of architecturally historic buildings which provides for a rich streetscape.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seaside heritage is alive and well and is something to be treasured.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The town centre is spacious and has enormous potential for revival.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seafront has been well-invested in and is thriving compared to other coastal holiday resorts. • Joyland and the Pleasure Beach offer traditional fairground entertainment. • The Britannia Pier and Wellington Pier together with the many amusement arcades and visitor attractions in the borough's coastal resorts provide a wealth of entertainment opportunities. • The borough has an enviable history of being home to holiday camps and parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The borough's cultural offer includes an eclectic variety of experiential venues including the award-winning Tide & Time Museum, Nelson Museum, Tolhouse Gaol, Elizabethan House Museum, theatre and performances spaces such as Gorleston Pavilion, The Drill House, St. George's Theatre, The Hippodrome, and art space such as Skippings Art Gallery. • The borough is well-served with a variety accommodation providers for visitors; from traditional bed & breakfast, to retro and boutique hotels, national hotel brands, camping/caravan, chalet accommodation, self-catering apartments and eco barns.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traditional seaside food and beverage outlets together with food influences from cultural settlers such as Greek, Portuguese, American and Italian provide residents and visitors with a wealth of choice of restaurants and take-aways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment is ongoing to renew community assets such as the Waterways, Marina Centre and in time, the Winter Gardens. • Private sector investment is evident in complexes such as The Edge and Royalty Cinema.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the gateway to the Norfolk Broads, Breydon Water opens to the sea through the Port of Great Yarmouth with the Rivers Yare, Bure and Waveney all flowing into Breydon connecting the Northern Broads to the Southern as well as access on the River Yare to Norwich and to Oulton Broad and Beccles on the River Bure across Breydon Water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mediaeval town wall is a scheduled ancient monument and town's most important heritage asset. Its active maintenance by the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust is acknowledged by Historic England as ground-breaking and an exemplar of best practice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Yarmouth borough has a variety of coastal landscapes including wild and unspoilt areas such as Winterton-on-Sea and Hemsby. • Long and stretching golden sandy beaches with space to relax. Fully accessible for all, where families can play safely and old, young and everyone in between can unwind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of green/renewable energy adorns the horizon like a forest of wind supporting inward investment and growth in supply chain sectors. • Marine and technology industries continue to flourish in the borough and bring with them skills, training and employment and an opportunity to showcase all that the borough as an entertainment, performance and recreational place has to offer.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market place in Great Yarmouth town centre and the heritage quarter at Hall Quay and South Quay have historical significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The borough has an enviable track record of holding successful public events and street festivals including the Out There Festival, Great Yarmouth Wheels Festival, Philby in Bloom, Martham Scarecrow Festival, Gorleston Clifftop Festival, Great Yarmouth Easter Fair, Summer Fireworks and the Maritime Festival.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Denes Dunes, along North Drive, are designated as both a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and SPA (Special Protection Area). The dune system supports a full successional sequence of plants, including the rare rush-leaved fescue and the nationally-scarce grey hair-grass. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roman sites of Burgh Castle and Caister-on-Sea were part of a string of forts along what the Romans knew as the 'Saxon Shore', the stretch of coast extending between the Solent and the Wash.

3 EMERGING VISION

3.1 In relation to the developing Culture and Tourism Strategy, an emerging vision and requirements is beginning to present itself from the analysis of comments received and discussion with stakeholder representatives over the past six months. They can be described as:

[1] TO BE AN ATTRACTIVE, EXCITING PROPOSITION

- Make sure the Strategy is EXCITING AND PASSIONATE
- Build upon Great Yarmouth's current strengths while broadening the offer to attract new markets
- Create a FOMO (Fear of missing out) feel in the place

[2] BE INCLUSIVE & FAR-REACHING

- Be owned by those who live and work in the borough, inclusive of all of Great Yarmouth
- Help people thrive - relate to others needs - prosperity, health, well-being sustainability
- Build up from the bottom - letting people get involved - clear communication - especially young people
- Need to be all inclusive something for everyone
- Be inclusive - for people coming to and for existing communities
- Be representative - decision making, steering groups, featuring the faces of those who are missing (encouraging participation) (informing programming)

[3] PROMOTE COLLABORATION

- Join-up partnerships and raise civic pride
- Continue the joint working between the public and private sectors
- Work with partners to get funding
- Cultural Board can be a Place Leadership Board

[4] DELIVER CREATIVE INNOVATION & ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Generate income – creating creative content and jobs
- Enable locally driven pilots - make it easy to participate and do and be flexible / responsive
- Encourage and support innovation and enterprise in the local community leading to better economic opportunity for local people and thereby attracting new audiences
- Extend wider audience and length of season to be all year-round resort
- Provide flexibility to try new things, deliver a wider range of events e.g. literature festival

[5] SUPPORT PRIDE OF PLACE

- Build up and enhance the quality of the heritage offer e.g. decluttering policy, local design guide /standard/review panel - the investment scheme
- Remember to maintain current assets and strengths - and build on them

[6] PROVIDE A STRONG PLACED-BASED BRAND

- Have an identifiable brand which is exciting and sets the borough apart from crowd
- Generate an internationally recognisable place and people-based brand
- Communicate with a brave, robust place-based brand, with bold design
- Enable more cohesive publicity strategy to include heritage, different demographics.
- Enable more market research into new markets
- Focus on Greater Yarmouth as a borough area, not just a beach

3.2 Facilitated by the commission of Thinking Place, work has commenced on [6] in the form of a unique and strong placed-based brand. Early indications are that the council's partners will unite around and support such a brand so as to communicate the 'sense of the place' which will embolden all that Great Yarmouth has to offer. This brand will be integral to the Culture and Tourism Strategy.

4 CREATIVE PEOPLE AND PLACES

4.1 Planning ahead in terms of delivery planning, the council and partners have taken the opportunity of making an application to the Arts Council England's Creative People and Places strategic fund: www.creativepeopleplaces.org.uk. This fund is designed to support collaboration in communities with areas of low engagement where creative

industry organisations can develop activities and other cultural events, shaped by communities.

- 4.2 Working with Voluntary Norfolk, SeaChange Arts, Jays UK Limited and Creative Collisions, this consortium initiative, if successful, will benefit the residents of Great Yarmouth borough by enabling the partner organisations to deliver more art-based, cultural activities and experiences in the form of easy-to-access workshops, taster sessions, training and audience-participative public events.
- 4.3 The consortium partners will build-on and expand the current creative provision that is alive and well and working within the borough into a range of accessible and demand-led artistic activities. This may consist of a greater variety of events held in our towns and village public spaces, new highly visible events in our neighbourhood areas such as artform performances e.g. live music, making sessions and craft workshops. The artistic elements will all serve to support residents learning new skills, from pure artistic performance and mentoring of creative industry skills through to social and emotional confidence-building and community cohesion.
- 4.4 Effectively delivering against the emerging vision as set in section 3 above supported by the Creative People and Places bid we can inspire residents of all ages in a way that will nurture interest in performance and entertainment through building confidence and equipping people with employment-related and social skills.

5 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Subject to members' comments on the content of this report and the direction of travel for a place-based brand, a final Culture and Tourism Strategy will be drafted in collaboration with stakeholder representatives on the Cultural Board. The Strategy incorporating a proposal place-based brand will then be brought forward for approval in the summer.

6 RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

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- (b) Review and provide comment on the observations and emerging key themes for the 10-year Strategy.
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Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	Yes
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	Yes
Existing Council Policies:	Corporate Plan
Financial Implications:	Within budget
Legal Implications (including human rights):	N/a
Equality Issues:	N/a
Crime & Disorder:	N/a
Every Child Matters:	N/a