Tourism VFM
Task Group Notes

Notes of the meeting of the Tourism VFM Task Group held on Tuesday 3 July 2012 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde

Members present:

Councillor Anderson  Councillor Balmain
Councillor E Anderton  Councillor M Gandhi
Councillor M Anderton  Councillor Cocker
Councillor Lady Atkins  Councillor Perkin

Officers present:

Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer

TM.41 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brooks, Hewitt, Turner and Wilson.

TM.42 Declarations of Interest

None.

TM.43 Notes of previous meetings

The notes of the meeting held on Thursday 21 June were agreed as a true and accurate record.

TM.44 Tourism in Wyre in 2020

Councillors carried out an exercise that looked at how tourism might look eight years in the future, in the year 2020. They took into account the evidence that they had already gathered as a task group, which included:
o Comparative information on how other councils deliver tourism services
o The ‘value’ of tourism to Wyre - Steam Report
o Cost of tourism to Wyre Council (actual costs provided)
o Evidence from County Councillor Jim Lawrenson, Lancashire County Council
o Visits to Wyre’s three Tourist Information Centre
o Details of visitor enquiries from recent Customer Survey at TICs
o Meetings with Wyre Tourism Association members (Sunset Park, Farmer Parrs) and the information that came from those meetings
o Evidence from Alexandra Holt, Tourism Development Officer, about how the council promotes tourism
o Marketing –
  • ‘Wyre . . . Lancashire’s Great Escape’ and other publications
  • ‘Visit Wyre’ website

Councillors then described the sort of tourism service that, bearing in mind the evidence that they had gathered, they thought they might like to see in the year 2020. This was a hypothetical exercise designed to assist the task group to begin to explore some of its potential conclusions and recommendations. Councillors made the following observations (this is deliberately written in the present tense in relation to the year 2020):

➢ Wyre is being promoted by Lancashire County Council
➢ The Wyre Tourism Association no longer exists
➢ Wyre has forged closer working links with Blackpool
➢ There are no Tourist Information Centres in the borough
➢ There are many Tourist Information Points (TIPs), many of which are touch-screen providers of current information for residents and tourists
➢ Potential tourists search the internet by name of place (e.g Garstang, Fleetwood) so the concept of ‘Wyre as a destination’ is now redundant
➢ The council prefers to promote individual towns (Garstang, Poulton, Thornton, Cleveleys and Fleetwood) rather than the whole borough
➢ People access all the information they need via smart phones
➢ A ‘Wyre App’ has been developed for smart phone use
➢ The council no longer prints promotional tourism brochures
➢ The council works very closely with the private sector in the promotion of tourism – supermarkets host TIPs, for example, and other sponsorship opportunities have been developed with beneficiaries of the tourism industry
➢ A detailed cost/benefit analysis of the implementation of increased
technology (TIPs, Wyre App, etc.) has been carried out
- The council has made significant financial savings through its new approach to tourism

**TM.45  Next Steps**

The task group would like more detailed information about the way in which the Internet is used, and how it can be developed in the future, to promote tourism in Wyre, and they asked that Andy Heath, eCommunications Officer, be invited to attend the next meeting.

Councillors asked for a verbal update about the progress of County Councillor Jim Lawrenson’s ‘Tourism Forum’, and raised the question of whether Marketing Blackpool might be willing to work more closely with Wyre on tourism in the years to come.

**TM.46  Date and time of next meeting**

To be agreed.