

## **Visitor Economy Campaign**

### **Purpose of report**

For discussion and direction.

### **Summary**

At the last CTS Programme Board, Members asked officers to develop a proposal for a visitor economy campaign. There is a real opportunity for the LGA to raise awareness about the value of tourism amongst our Members, and to call for reforms that will make it easier for councils to work in partnership with industry to create and sustain great destinations.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to comment upon the suggested aims of the campaign (paragraph 4) and actions (paragraphs 7, 10 & 12).

### **Action**

Officers to develop and implement a more detailed campaign plan, reflecting Members' steer.

<b>Contact officer:</b>	Laura Caton
<b>Position:</b>	Senior Adviser
<b>Phone no:</b>	020 7664 3154
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:laura.caton@local.gov.uk">laura.caton@local.gov.uk</a>

## **Visitor Economy Campaign**

### **Background**

- 1 As the fifth largest industrial sector in the UK, the visitor economy has massive potential to support employment, investment and skills development at a time of slow economic growth. It accounts for £90 billion direct spend each year, contains over 200,000 businesses and provides 4.4% of the nation's jobs, a large proportion of them entry-level jobs in which newcomers to the labour market acquire fundamental skills.
- 2 Councils – which ensure the quality and development of the core infrastructure of places, such as transport facilities and clean, safe and attractive public spaces – are heavily involved in supporting the visitor economy, investing over £100m per year in business support, visitor information and destination marketing. They also spend a significant amount on culture and heritage and support major cultural, business and sporting events; all of which are key attractions for tourists.
- 3 The visitor economy landscape has undergone significant change as a result of the demise of Regional Development Agencies, the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships, and continued financial pressures for the public sector and industry.

### **Outline campaign**

- 4 As we get ready to welcome the world in 2012, there is a real opportunity for the LGA to raise awareness about the value of tourism amongst our Members, and to call for reforms that will make it easier for councils to work in partnership with industry to create and sustain great destinations.
- 5 This section suggests how we might achieve three headline aims. Members are asked to comment on the outline campaign plan to enable officers to develop and implement a more detailed plan.
- 6 Aim 1: Raise awareness about the value of the visitor economy amongst our Members.
- 7 Key actions and outputs could include:
  - 7.1 Joint letter from CTS Programme Board Chair and Tourism Minister to Portfolio Holders (this is subject to the Minister's agreement).

- 7.2 Support VisitEngland's "growing tourism locally" campaign, which is making funding available to local campaigns.
- 7.3 Article in **first** magazine to promote councils' role in the visitor economy.
- 7.4 Refresh and promote visitor economy case studies.
- 7.5 Promote English Tourism Week to councils.
- 7.6 Press releases around the local value of tourism and the 2012 Games boost.
- 7.7 Visitor economy workshop at CTS annual conference.
- 7.8 Member Seminar with VisitEngland.
- 7.9 Continue to develop our relationship with the British Hospitality Association.
- 8 These actions will be underpinned by refreshing our data and analysis on the economic value of the visitor economy and will draw upon the key messages already agreed by the Board.
- 9 Aim 2: Work with councils and VisitEngland to develop and share innovative approaches to public and private sector investment in the local visitor economy, such as Tourism Business Improvement Districts.
- 10 Key actions and outputs could include:
  - 10.1 Maintain an overview of and share good practice around new approaches to destination management and investing in the visitor economy, including the role of local enterprise partnerships.
  - 10.2 Test wider interest in Tourism Business Improvement Districts. (VisitEngland's Visitor Economy Forum on 1 December is an opportunity to do this.)
- 11 Aim 3: Call for reforms that will make it easier for councils to work in partnership with industry to create and sustain great destinations, grow our economy and create jobs.
- 12 This aim will be taken forward by embedding the visitor economy in the LGA's 'asks' around infrastructure, skills, growth, finance and planning. We need to encourage other Programme Boards to recognise and integrate the visitor economy into their lobbying. For example, we have already discussed how tourism can feature in the Economy and Transport Programme Board's local growth campaign. Our campaign also presents opportunities to give existing lobbying a visitor economy slant, which could help to maintain the profile and increase the reach of key messages.
- 13 Through the LGA's Membership of the Visitor Economy Forum, we also have an opportunity to encourage industry to work more closely with councils and LEPS.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

- 14 It is suggested that we launch the campaign in early 2012, to coincide with the Chair's letter to councillors. Officers will develop a more detailed campaign plan in response to Members' steer.

### **Financial Implications**

- 15 The campaign can be taken forward within existing resources.