



<b>Report to:</b>	Culture, Heritage and Sport Committee
<b>Date:</b>	26 January 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Local Visitor Economy Partnership Update</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Felix Kumi-Ampofo
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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## 1. Purpose of this report

1.1 To update members on the progression of the West Yorkshire Local Visitor Economy Partners. In July, VisitEngland, the national tourism body for England, approved the joint application of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (CA) and the five Local Authorities to become accredited as a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for West Yorkshire.

1.2 This paper provides an overview and update on a number of related developments concerning the newly established LVEP, including prioritisation of activities proposed in the Destination Management Plan, and a Business Case submitted as part of an emerging funding proposal.

1.3 Members are asked to note the progress of the scheme.

## 2. Context

2.1.1 The CA's Culture, Heritage and Sport Framework's Place theme reflects the importance of the visitor economy to the region, and its ambition to grow the sector:

*Culture, heritage and sport brings joy and meaning to our communities at town, city, rural and regional level. They are part of our identity as a region, and closely linked to our*

*wellbeing and community coherence. Beyond West Yorkshire, our culture tells the world who we are, and attracts people to the region.*

***Ambition:*** *We have a thriving cultural tourism sector.*

***How we will do this:*** *We will grow awareness of West Yorkshire as a cultural destination, nationally and internationally.*

***What we will measure:*** *The level of culture, heritage and sport tourism in the region.*

2.1.2 The Visitor Economy is also referenced in the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy, under Investment Priority 6, Culture, Heritage and Sport:

***Visitor and Citizen Experience:*** *harnessing a vibrant West Yorkshire cultural offer to drive a confident COVID-19 recovery of our places visitor economy - creating a strong regional identity promoted globally, regenerating our places and ensuring our citizens can access quality experiences which enhance their lives.*

2.1.3 As part of the LVEP application to VisitEngland, the CA and LAs commissioned a **Destination Management Plan (DMP)**. The DMP focuses on the priorities and collaborative activities that, at a West Yorkshire level, will build a better and more productive visitor economy sector. It is intended to complement the localised visitor economy plans of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield.

2.1.4 The Destination Management Plan has three work streams:

- **Increase Awareness and Appeal**
- **Develop our Product and Places**
- **Manage Our Visitor Economy Effectively**

2.1.5 The DMP, which has previously been shared with the CHS Committee, includes proposals for a wide range of activities under each of these headings.

2.1.6 The LVEP Board, with input from CHS Committee members, has prioritised and refined these activities into a set of phased actions that are deliverable within a 2-year timeframe and a budget of £500k.

### 3.1 **Progress since last CHS Committee update (24 October, 2023)**

3.2 The LVEP Board, chaired by the Mayor, met for its inaugural meeting on 24/10/23, and discussed the aims and mission of the LVEP, governance, and prioritisation of Destination Management Plan Activities. A calendar of board meetings (every 2 months until Dec 2024) has been agreed and shared. See Item 7, Appendix 1 for LVEP Board membership.

3.2.1 High-level meeting between the Mayor and VisitEngland Director Andrew Stokes took place on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023, to discuss LVEP plans and ambitions to become Tier 1 Destination Development Partnership.

3.2.3 A workshop was held on 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 with LVEP Board members and CHS Committee Members, to prioritise Destination Management Plan Activities and scope available sector data and research.

#### 4.1 DMP Prioritisation

LVEP DMP Workshop prioritised the following activities:

1. Develop a commercial strategy
2. Baseline data and research
3. Proposition scoping
4. Marketing campaign
5. Events campaign
6. Research and develop itineraries and bookable products
7. Scope visitor pass
8. Business Support and Skills Training

#### De-prioritized:

- Awards and conference activity
- Tourism Tsar / figurehead role

3.3.4 A business case has been submitted to secure the £500,000 funding needed to begin delivery. Final approval is expected in March 2024. **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

3.1 Embedding sustainable tourism is one of the key programme goals for the LVEP programme. The strategic development of the West Yorkshire visitor economy enables a focus on sustainable activities for and by visitors and businesses and other actors within the sector that minimise the negative environmental impact of tourism. There is also an opportunity to link existing activity delivered with the Combined Authority's net-zero ambitions, such as promoting sustainable travel of visitors to and within the region.

#### 4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 The creation of an LVEP realises the ambition that place matters, and that West Yorkshire is an outward looking global region with its people and businesses operating on the world stage. Strategic development and support of our visitor economy intends a positive shift of local and wider perceptions of our region, contributing to local pride, as well as attract new investment, grow businesses and create jobs. As outlined in the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy, inclusive growth cannot be a bolt-on and any project seeking funding from the Combined Authority must demonstrate a proactive and targeted approach to engaging with and bringing benefit to disadvantaged groups. This approach will apply equally to any proposals for investment in the West Yorkshire LVEP.



## **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

5.1 The EDI priorities for the DMP are to:

- ensure a diverse talent pool and increased social mobility across the visitor economy
- reduce barriers to accessing education, training,
- and employment in the sector for those from underrepresented groups
- work with visitor economy businesses and assets to ensure their offer is accessible to visitors with additional needs
- ensure alignment to wider CA Inclusive Growth goals

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## **8. Staffing Implications**

8.1 The Business Case proposes that delivery of the DMP activities sits within Leeds City Council, who will recruit a Programme Manager to lead delivery of the work.

## **9. External Consultees**

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

## **10. Recommendations**

10.1 Members are asked to note the progress of the LVEP scheme.

10.2 Members are asked to comment on the prioritisation of the DMP activities.

## **11. Background Documents**

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

## **12. Appendices**

Item 7, Appendix 1 – LVEP Board Membership