Housing and Economy Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 21 March 2019

Edinburgh Tourism Strategy Update Report

Item number	8.7
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Committee:

1.1.1 notes the process underway to develop a refreshed strategy for tourism;

1.1.2 notes that another update report will be presented in August 2019 prior to a final report at the end of 2019 to approve the new strategy;

1.1.3 notes a one third share (£20,000) of the costs of producing a new strategy has been provided in a Grant Agreement by the Council to Edinburgh Tourism Action Group; and

1.1.4 refers this report to Culture and Communities Committee.

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Report

Edinburgh Tourism Strategy Update Report

2.   Executive Summary

2.1   A refreshed tourism strategy is being co-produced by Edinburgh Tourism Action Group and stakeholders including the City of Edinburgh Council. A Working Group on Tourism and Communities will ensure that the views and voice of residents are included in the process. This report outlines the process, progress to date, and the points at which further reports will be brought to the Council.

3.   Background

3.1   A city tourism strategy "Edinburgh 2020" was produced in 2012/2013. Whilst Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) led on its development, the Council and other stakeholders participated in its development and endorsed the strategy.

3.2   Following the production of Edinburgh 2020, the Strategic Implementation Group (SIG) was established to oversee the strategy. SIG is comprised of leading stakeholders in the Tourism sector. It is chaired by the Council's Chief Executive and attended by the Conveners of Housing and Economy and Culture and Communities Committees. A full list of SIG membership and a link to the group terms of reference can be found here.

3.3   In late 2017 SIG, ETAG and other stakeholders began to discuss a process and programme to develop a refreshed tourism strategy by 2020. This was outlined on 30 January 2018 to Culture and Communities Committee. The proposals were also discussed at the ETAG Conference on 1 February 2018.

3.4   The aim is to co-produce a partnership strategy which will support sustainable tourism.

3.5   At the request of the Culture and Communities Committee, an Elected Members Working Group was established to examine the effects of tourism on residents and communities and to feed its findings directly into the strategy development process.

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4. Main report

4.1 The process to develop a tourism strategy for Edinburgh 2020 to 2030 is being overseen by SIG and taken forward in four stages:

    4.1.1 research and evidence gathering (July to December 2018);

    4.1.2 industry, stakeholder and resident consultation (January to June 2019);

    4.1.3 collate all research and industry consultation (July to September 2019); and

    4.1.4 draft strategy, test, and approval (September to December 2019).

4.2 The aim is to launch the new tourism strategy at ETAG conference in January 2020.

4.3 The tourism strategy will be a partnership strategy, co-produced by ETAG and supporting stakeholders, overseen by the SIG. The Council will input to the strategy across a number of services within the Place Directorate e.g. Economic Development, Culture and Communities. Elected members will input through membership of the SIG, Working Group on Tourism and Communities.

4.4 The draft strategy will be presented to the Culture and Communities and Housing and Economy Committees at the end of 2019 for approval.

4.5 The initial outcome of stage one (research and evidence gathering) was reported at ETAG Conference 31 January 2019:

4.6 A stage one report is available to download at www.ETAG.org and committee members will be informed once this is on line.

4.7 In summary, the research identifies six issues:

    4.7.1 Accommodation supply;

    4.7.2 Value per visitor, and productivity;

    4.7.3 Visitor experience and pedestrian experience;

    4.7.4 Visitor-resident relationship;

    4.7.5 Tourism leadership, governance and delivery; and

    4.7.6 Tourism demand

4.8 These issues are expected to form the basis of wide ranging consultation with stakeholders during stage two of the strategy development process.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Stage 2 of the strategy development process, industry, stakeholder and resident consultation is underway. This includes the work programme for the Working Group on Tourism and Communities which will feed in its findings.

5.2 Since the announcement on 31 January by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance that legislation will be introduced to allow a Transient Visitor Levy it will make sense to embed this as a key factor as the Council, ETAG and partners develop the strategy.

5.2 The SIG, which includes Conveners of Housing and Economy and Culture and Communities will continue to oversee the development process.

4.2 Further update reports will be brought to committee in August and late 2019.

6. Financial impact

6.1 The costs of producing the refreshed strategy have been estimated to be £60,000 covering all four stages. The costs include consultation events and fees for consultancy services engaged by ETAG/Scottish Enterprise.

6.2 These costs are being met by the principal partners in equal shares as follows: City of Edinburgh Council £20,000, Scottish Enterprise £20,000 and ETAG £20,000

6.3 With the approval of the SIG, the Council has provided ETAG with a Grant Agreement for £20,000 to be met from the Economic Development Service budget £10,000 in 2018/2019 and £10,000 in 2019/2020.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

7.1 Stage 2 of the strategy development process will include broad consultation with the tourism sector.

7.2 The Working Group on Tourism and Communities will ensure that the views and voice of residents contribute to the process

8. Background reading/external references

8.1 Report to Culture and Communities, Item 9.1 on 30 January 2018

8.2 Edinburgh 2020.

9. Appendices

None.

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