

Thanet Destination Management Framework

Cabinet	23rd April 2020
Report Author	Louise Askew, Head of Strategic Partnerships
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Duckworth, Cabinet Member for Estates and Economic Development
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Ward:	All wards

Executive Summary:

A new Destination Management Framework has been developed, which builds on the first Destination Management Plan (DMP) developed in 2012/13.

The Framework is for all stakeholders in the destination, and sets out shared priorities for the next five years, to grow and strengthen the visitor economy. The Framework focuses on growing the value of our Visitor Economy making sure it is sustainable by developing a tourism offer that is year round - with local businesses investing in their people and product, which is good for the local community and environment and also attracts visitors to stay.

The headline priorities for the next five years are identified as:

- **Vibrant Towns** - making Thanet's town centres more attractive for visitors and providing more of the right kind of accommodation.
- **Coastline Focus** - focusing on providing year round experiences, activities and facilities at key sites along the coast.
- **The Isle of Thanet Promise** - using the strong themes from Thanet's shared story to develop brilliant experiences and a brilliant welcome.

Despite the current situation related to the Covid-19 pandemic, working together across the district and with all local, regional and national stakeholders, will be more important than ever. The Destination Management Framework provides an informed way for all parties to engage and deliver. The priorities are still likely to be the same in terms of the sector's recovery. With an adopted plan in place the Council and its partners can use the Framework to lobby for support from key players, both public and private sector, within the tourism industry.

Recommendation(s):

That Thanet District Council members formally adopt the Thanet Destination Management Framework.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	<p>No budget implications</p> <p>Each element of delivery for the Council will be considered on a project by project basis.</p>								
Legal	<p>Each element of delivery for the Council will be considered on a project by project basis.</p>								
Corporate	<p>Corporate Statement: Within the 'Growth' priority, amongst other things, the plan specifically supports the ambition to 'continue to promote tourism in Thanet and the increase in jobs that this will bring to the District.' The plan also impacts on the Council delivery within the Environment and Communities priorities.</p> <p>Risk The main risk to the delivery of the plan for the Council, and all stakeholders, is the current situation in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, having an informed plan forms a basis for developing a recovery strategy, particularly for this sector. Council officers will engage with those bodies addressing the needs for economic recovery and the tourism sector will play a key role for the district.</p>								
Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	<p>Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 1491 1305 1749"> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="427 1491 1305 1525">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="427 1536 1305 1603">Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1536 1375 1603"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="427 1615 1305 1682">Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1615 1375 1682"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="427 1693 1305 1749">Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td> <td data-bbox="1305 1693 1375 1749"></td> </tr> </table> <p><i>You should then explain how your report supports the aims you have indicated in the table above.</i></p> <p>The plan does not specifically address any protected characteristics, it is to support growth of the tourism sector, and relates to how all stakeholders can deliver. Specific programmes of work will consider the Public Sector Equality Duty within the project development.</p>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,		Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it		Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.									
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,									
Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it									
Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.									

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓	
Growth	✓
Environment	✓
Communities	✓

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Tourism is a vital component of Thanet's economy and has seen significant growth in recent years. It is worth £320 million per year to the local economy and supports, directly and indirectly 7,950 jobs.
- 1.2 In 2013, Thanet was the first authority to develop a Destination Management Plan, following the principles set down by Visit England, the National Tourism Agency. The plan brought about a new way of partnership working with the public, private sector and 3rd sector, having a shared vision and plan that had three priorities, providing focus to enable growth in the visitor economy.
- 1.3 A great deal was achieved over the five years of the plan, however some of the larger longer term and complex actions around regeneration and assets have not yet happened. Visitors are vital to Thanet, not just for jobs, but because they support local services and local people's quality of life. However, despite recent growth the visitor economy needs to be more sustainable and attract more staying visitors, and more visitors outside the summer months. Blue Sail, a leading destination management consultants were commissioned to assist in the development of a new Framework.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 The Framework builds on the previous Destination Management Plan, reframing the priorities and reinforcing the need for partnership working, to help achieve a more sustainable visitor economy. This is vital when the public sector continues to face financial constraints, requiring all stakeholders to work together.
- 2.2 The development of the framework and its priorities included engagement with local stakeholders through an interactive workshop, involving over 50 people; meetings and interviews; plus an online survey with 30 responses. The Senior Management Team and Portfolio Holder were also engaged in the process of developing the Framework.
- 2.3 As part of the process, primary research was reviewed, including local visitor surveys, economic data and perception research undertaken by Visit Kent. Plus national holiday trend data and specific research in coastal destinations undertaken by the National Tourism Academy.
- 2.4 The Framework provides a focused plan to strengthen the visitor economy, the headline priorities for the next five years are:
- **Vibrant Towns - making Thanet's town centres more attractive for visitors and providing more if the right kind of accommodation.**
 - **Coastline Focus - focusing on providing year-round experiences, activities and facilities at key sites along the coast.**

- **The Isle of Thanet Promise - using the strong themes from Thanet's Shared Story to develop brilliant experiences and a brilliant welcome.**

- 2.5 The three priorities will deliver higher spend, more prosperous businesses and bring benefits to the local community. The focus will continue on the three towns where there is greater opportunity for economic growth, the coastline being a major motivator for visitors. There will be a need to focus on different ways of delivering improved experiences and enhanced facilities that respond to growing markets, in particular “wellbeing” experiences and outdoor activity, which makes use of off-peak periods.
- 2.6 The Framework is a strategic approach and plan of action for the destination, not just for the council. The council needs to play a strategic and enabling role, working with local businesses, organisations and individuals from public, private and 3rd sector, and encourage them to deliver against the priorities.
- 2.7 Relevant Council strategies, policies and plans need to consider and support the ambition and priorities for delivery in the Framework. This is essential, to enable the framework to be successful, and to strengthen the visitor economy. This includes the Councils position in developing a direction of travel for recovery, following the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1 Strong engagement and facilitation is required to enable partnership working, to ensure the delivery of this plan, particularly at this current time. This will include significant engagement with the relevant government departments and regional bodies, to ensure the plan is able to support the recovery of the district's visitor economy.
- 3.2 The Framework will be owned by the Corporate Management Team and a yearly update will be provided to Cabinet.

Contact Officer:	Paula Harbidge, Tourism Manager
Reporting to:	Louise Askew, Head of Strategic Partnerships

Annex List

Annex 1	Thanet Destination Management Framework
---------	---

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Clive Bowen, Finance Manager
Legal	Estelle Culligan, Head of Legal and Democratic Services