

CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LIFESTYLE, SPORT AND TOURISM
14th December, 2010

Present:- Councillor St. John (in the Chair) and Councillor Falvey.

D44. REVIEW OF TOURISM SERVICE PROVISION

Consideration was given to a report introduced by Marie Hayes, Events and Promotions Service Manager, which set out options for the future of the Tourism Service.

It was noted that as part of the savings identified for financial year 2009/ 10 two posts in the Tourism Service were disestablished leaving only the post of Tourism Manager. Subsequent to this the Tourism Manager resigned in April, 2010 and this post was not filled, but offered up as a temporary in year saving for Culture and Leisure, pending inclusion in wider budget discussions.

This left the Events and Promotions Service with a difficult problem in that the remaining staff had little or no experience or capacity to carry out the tourism function with the team only able to respond to sub-regional and regional enquiries from tourism bodies. No promotional work was being undertaken relating to tourist attractions and accommodations in the borough other than general promotion through the Visitor Centre.

The Visitor Centre's role had gradually changed over the last year or so to focus more on providing local information for local people and the promotion of local town centre businesses.

In the consideration of the four options none included the withdrawal of the Visitor Centre function which was felt to be a vital service that was offered in the town centre for both local people and local businesses.

Each option, along with the advantages, disadvantages, cost implications and risks, were considered in detail with relevant savings identified under each individual option.

Option 3 was the preferred option and if approved would offer a saving of £63,100 from 2011/ 12.

Discussion ensued on the remit of the Visitor Centre, the promotion of Rotherham under the umbrella of Welcome to Yorkshire and how better use could be made of the Council's website to promote Rotherham's attractions.

Resolved:- (1) That Option 3 (withdrawal of the tourism service provision, including the subscription to British Resorts and Destinations, but subscribe to Welcome to Yorkshire) be approved.

(2) That the Visitor Centre be retained as an important function in providing information for local people and supporting local businesses.

(3) That information be forwarded onto the representatives of the Tourism Panel informing them of the decision.