

**TOURISM PANEL  
MONDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Boyes, St. John and Walker.

together with:-

Matthew Beck	Chief Executive MAGNA
Joanne Edley	Tourism Manager
Marie Hayes	Events & Promotions Service Manager
Bernard Jones	South Yorkshire Transport Museum
Richard Parry	Transportation Unit
Caroline Wilson	Yorkshire South Tourism

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:-

Chris Majer	Policy Officer
Stuart Reaney	Chesterfield Canal Partnership
Tom Waldron-Lynch	Hellaby Hall Hotel
Julie Williamson	Dearne Valley College

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 2ND NOVEMBER, 2009**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting of the Tourism Panel held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2009.

Resolved:- That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

The following issue was reported:-

Events at Magna – 2010 Food and Drink Festival

It was reported that Magna needed a decision from the Council's Markets Team as soon as possible.

Those present discussed:-

- the number of similar events being arranged
- benefits
- inclusion of market traders
- funding for and the branding of the events

Resolved:- That the Cabinet Member discusses this issue with the Markets Manager and informs Magna of the outcome.

#### **4. ITEMS RAISED BY INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES**

Industry Representatives reported on the following:-

- (i) South Yorkshire Transport Museum

Bernard Jones reported on the opening of extra space at the museum. It was hope that an official opening would be planned for the summer and Panel Members would be invited.

- (ii) Dearne Valley College

Joanne Edley, Tourism Manager, on behalf of Julie Williamson reported on the following:-

Part-time delivery of Foundation degree in Travel & Tourism Management to be launched in September - 18 modules over 2 years (several of which based in workplace) at a cost of £225 per module or £1530 per year - being a 15% reduction on modular payment - delivered on Saturdays (one every 6 weeks or so), together with on-line and tutorial support. Total 17 days over the 2 years class delivery for the full Foundation degree, so extremely flexible for those working already.

The Chair of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel asked that training be included as an item/presentation on the agenda for a future meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel.

- (iii) Events at Magna

Matthew Beck, Magna, reported on the slight up turn in the business tourism sector. Recent events held included:- Kia Car launch; Aviva national conference: Greencall. Enquiries had already been received from the retail sector.

#### **5. PROVIDING TRAFFIC SIGNS FOR TOURISM DESTINATIONS - CODE OF PRACTICE AND POLICY**

Richard Pardy, Transportation Unit, reported on changes to the current Tourism policy as a result of changes in Government bodies and policies from the DfT and that a report to Cabinet Member for ED, P&T will be issued shortly to seek authority to update the existing policy for tourist signs and to implement new policies for 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Signing and Temporary Event and Housing Signing.

It was pointed out that it was essential that the Council as Highway Authority, had a knowledge of all proposed sign locations to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the highway network, whilst also preventing

un-necessary signage clutter.

Each policy has been designed to give continuity in its appearance and layout of information. The aim is to tie together all three forms of signage request into standard pricing packages, making it easier for the engineer to give consistent advice and quotes.

It was explained that the proposed pricing structure would cover administration costs.

Those present discussed the proposed charging and the impact this would have on events e.g. Rotherham Show and on the operation of the Museum and Civic Theatre.

Reference was made to the internal system of recharging and to departments having to bid to the central marketing fund.

Concern was expressed at the detrimental effect this would have on the contribution being made by other areas of the Council, particularly those that were offering free events and its impact on the tourist attractions e.g. Magna.

Richard Pardy, clarified the charge for permanent tourist signs had always been set out as a one off cost for their provision and erection, lasting for a period of 10 years. The proposed charge for temporary event signage would not affect the permanent signing schemes; the proposed changes were to cover the pressures on existing EDS revenue budgets.

Concern was also expressed about the lack of signage to Magna during the on-going road works at Centenary Way which had closed part of the road.

Resolved:- That the draft report be considered by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation and the Chair of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel prior to being considered for approval and implementation.

## **6. YORKSHIRE VISITOR SURVEY ANALYSIS**

Caroline Wilson, Yorkshire South Tourism, reported

(i) the results of the analysis of the Regional visitor Survey which was carried out across Yorkshire from May 2008 to April 2009. It was explained that these were the first year results and that the survey would continue for 3 years.

In total 10,752 surveys were carried out, of which 2,117 were done in South Yorkshire, 22% (465) were undertaken in Rotherham mostly at Magna, The Tropical Butterfly House and Rother Valley Country Park.

The Yorkshire South area had a high proportion of Day Visitors = 79%; For Rotherham this = 91%. Thus highlighting the issue of how to convert these into overnight stays. A high proportion visited friends and relatives rather than using paid for accommodation.

Yorkshire South repeat visitors = 74%  
73% of people came from within the Yorkshire region

Age Profile – differed across the region.  
In Rotherham 45% had children and family groups

Booked accommodation:- 56% booked on line

Attractions most visited = Cultural; historic houses; friends and relatives, outdoors; special events. In Rotherham 72% were visiting the museum or the art gallery

94% of current visitors had a positive experience and would recommend South Yorkshire to friends or family.

Main spend:- a high proportion was related to travel and transport; food and drink before 5 pm; shopping and other visitor attractions.

Average spend figures – for Sheffield = £30; for Rotherham = £13

This highlighted opportunities to increase spend in certain visitor markets and within the evening economy and to encourage people to stay for longer.

Age Groups:- Sheffield had attracted the younger age range of 16 to 34. Rotherham was mainly children and family groups

Members present commented on:-

- Efforts to attract Olympic teams
- Locations chosen for the survey
- Value of the statistics
- Hotels not included in the survey
- Future website surveys
- Possible links with Primary Care Trusts in terms of links which enable elderly people to remain active

(ii) the submission of a Business Plan to Welcome to Yorkshire

This would be discussed shortly by the Welcome to Yorkshire Board to agree the budget. To date there had been no feedback. It was pointed out that the Welcome to Yorkshire Board was funding different streams so it remained unknown what parts of our Business Plan would be funded.

## 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following issues were reported:-

**(i) Walking Festival**

This was planned for 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May. 30 activities had been planned involving volunteers and Council staff. The Rotherham Roundwalk had been included, and Rotherham United Football Club would be involved with the walk.

Bluebell Wood and Bosom Buddies charity walk would also be included.

**(ii) Sheffield Athletics Race/Walk coaching and challenge**

This would be organised in conjunction with Sports Development and possibly Rotherham Harriers at the Herringthorpe Stadium.

**(iii) Anston Stone Wood walk:-** being arranged and using the Parish hall.

**(iv) Magna – Boxing Licence:-** this was being applied for.

**8. DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Tourism Panel be held on MONDAY, 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2010 at 2.00 p.m. at Bailey House.