

TO: ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY COMMITTEE JULY 20TH 2005

SUBJECT: TOURISM

FROM: CUSTOMER INFORMATION AND ADVICE/ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To outline the work of the Tourism Working Party and gain support for the group to monitor progress on the issues that have been raised, and the SWT proposed review, and report back further to the October meeting .

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The working party was established to review the work of South Warwickshire Tourism Ltd. Membership of the Working Party comprises of Cllrs Goode, Ashford, Cockburn, Hodgetts and Edwards.

2.2 The group has held three meetings and considered the following:-

- (a) The relationship and role of SWT Ltd in working with the Town Councils, Town centre Management and Chambers of Trade in developing the visitor market.

In considering this issue the working party invited representatives of Town Councils, Town Centre Management groups and Chamber of Trade to join them.

The discussion concluded that there was a lack of positive collaboration at times and there was a need to improve working relationships. There was also often a lack of understanding as to who was responsible for what in terms of both promotional activity and providing information to visitors.

Warwick also raised their concern at the Town Council having to continue the funding of the Warwick Tourist Information Centre.

- (b) The Working Party was able to consider the Service Level Agreement with SWT and felt that continued work was necessary to make the agreement smarter and improve the overall monitoring.
- (c) A joint meeting was held with the Stratford on Avon District Council Tourism Scrutiny Committee. This meeting also involved the Economic Development Portfolio Holders from each Authority and Alex Holmes the Chief Executive of SWT Ltd.

During discussions the Working Party expressed concern that Stratford District Council had withdrawn £50,000 in funding to SWT without any consultation with Warwick District Council. They further stressed that this reduction should not effect services to the Warwick area. SWT outlined their proposals to make good the reduction in funding through a combination of reduction in costs, undertaking consultancy work and increasing membership.

3. POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK

The report relates directly to the Corporate Strategic objective to support a prosperous mixed economy and specifically to support tourism. The budgetary requirement for tourism is met within the revenue estimates

4. OUTCOME(S) REQUIRED

Work has progressed with Town Centre Managers, SWT staff and others to address some of the issues raised. The board of SWT has met and considered recommendations from there own Working Group relating to the issues raised and the new challenges of tourism including the impact of new technologies and the implications arising from the new role being undertaken by Advantage West Midlands, the regional development agency in tourism. The SWT board including our member Directors have agreed to undertake a strategic review of SWT.

Given the review and the need to monitor progress on the issues raised by the Working Party, it is proposed that the group be continued and to report back to this Committee in October 2005

Dennis Stanley
Economic Development Officer

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to the Executive of the 29th March 2005 on the Service Level Agreement with SWT Ltd

Areas in District Affected: *ALL*

Executive Portfolio Area and Holder: *ECONOMIC RICHARD TAMLIN*

For further information about this report please contact:

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