

		Executive – February 2014		Agenda Item No. 14	
Title			Economic Development Action Plan – National Bowls Championships		
For further information about this report, please contact:					
Wards of the District directly affected:			Leamington Wards & Warwick District		
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?			No		
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number:			Executive: November 2013		
Background Papers:			November 2011 – Bowls Working Party report to O&S Committee; Impact Assessments – STRI; Neil Allen Associates; WDC 2009 Tourism Economic Impact Assessment WDC Proposal to Bowls England (August 2012) Relocation of Bowls England HQ and the Men's Championships to Royal Leamington Spa (December 2012) FoVP Petition to Council – Sept 2013 User Survey – July/Aug 2013		
Contrary to the policy framework:				No	
Contrary to the budgetary framework:				No	
Key Decision?				No	
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)				Yes Ref:?	
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken:				Yes	
Officer/Councillor Approval					
Officer Approval		Date	Name		
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive			Chris Elliott/ Andrew Jones		
Head of Service			Tracy Darke / Rose Winship		
CMT			Chris Elliott, Bill Hunt, Andrew Jones		
Section 151 Officer			Mike Snow		
Monitoring Officer			Andrew Jones		
Finance			Mike Snow		
Portfolio Holder(s)			Cllr John Hammon / Cllr Stephen Cross		
Consultation & Community Engagement					
Final Decision				Yes	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)					

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report summarises the actions being taken to maximise the economic impact of the Bowls England Championships taking place in Royal Leamington Spa from 2014 onwards.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Executive agrees the proposed Action Plan at Appendix 1 which is designed to deliver maximum economic impact from the bowls and measure its effectiveness.
- 2.2. The Executive authorises the release of £5,000 from the tourism reserve and delegates to the ED&R manager in conjunction with the portfolio holder for Development Services to spend as per the attached action plan items.
- 2.3. The Executive notes that a further Executive report on impacts will be brought in late autumn & winter of 2014.

3. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1. The action plan attached at Appendix One has been developed in conjunction with colleagues in Cultural Services, Bowls England and BID Leamington. The ED&R team have also been working with Shakespeare's England Ltd on specific items – including the promotion of the Bowls and the towns further afield.
- 3.2. The action plan is split broadly into four areas, each of which forms part of the "visitor journey": -
 - Welcome and Feel of the town – how do we make the town feel different and make the visitors feel valued;
 - Way finding - how the visitor will find their way around and discover Royal Leamington Spa and the wider area;
 - Offers and Promotions – measurable promotions that will spread visitors around the area;
 - Data Capture and Analysis – measuring the impact, building databases and analysing changes that can be made for 2015.
- 3.3. The Action Plan is intended to help spread the benefits of the month-long Championships around the District. It recognises that we are working with both an existing event (the Women's Championships) and a new event (the Men's Championships) and as stated, make a good impression of both Royal Leamington Spa and the wider District.
- 3.4. In developing the action plan for 2014, officers have recognised that this year will provide a "base line" of economic activity to measure and build on. There are also financial constraints and a recognition that some of things that will be tried will not work as intended. This will allow a natural evolution of actions.

- 3.5. There are insufficient financial resources within either the ED&R budget or the Tourism budget for one off items of expenditure such as items 1.4 and 2.3. Releasing £5,000 from the Tourism Reserve will allow an investment in capital items that can be re-used year on year – subject to them being adequately looked after. This allows projects such as a defined and way-marked path from the bowls venue to the town centre to be laid out and tested for effectiveness.
- 3.6. After the 2014 Championships, analysis will be undertaken to assess the impact of the bowls and an effectiveness of some of the promotions. It is intended this work will inform the 2015 action plans and provide the basis of a joint report to Executive.
- 3.7. The data capture process will also allow the development of a database of contacts for use by the tourism company.

4. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1. The proposals in Appendix 1 support the Warwick District Sustainable Community Strategy. In particular it will continue to make direct contributions to the following:
- **Jobs, Skill and Economy** – encouraging visitors to the district who make a significant contribution to the local economy through overnight stays, hospitality, visitor attractions and retail.
 - **Health and Well Being** – contribute to encouraging active lifestyles for all sectors of the local community and visitors to the district.
 - **Involving Communities** - provide support for local clubs and other community groups.

5. BUGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1. The majority of the works will be accommodated within the Economic Development and Tourism Budgets as previously requested by Executive.
- 5.2. The tourism reserve currently has an unallocated amount of £51,100. The expenditure of £5,000 will leave an allocated reserve of £46,100.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S) CONSIDERED

- 6.1. To not carry out any promotional works: this would be entirely counter-productive and would not maximise the benefits of the additional potential expenditure within the district. It would also be counter to the Bowls England agreement.
- 6.2. To outsource the work to another organisation: The best way to maximise the impacts and spread the benefits is to use the partnerships and expertise we already have at our disposal. The costs of delivering the works would also be higher.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The August 2012 Executive report quoted the estimated economic impact figures for the Bowls. Worthing estimated that the two week Men's Championships had 10,000 visitors and that the value of the Bowls to the area was in the range of £500,000 to £900,000. Utilising this base data, the 2009 tourism economic impact study and the West Midlands Economic Impact Toolkit, the estimate for the additional economic impact on Warwick District was in the range of £713,000 to £1.2m.