

**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017

**Lead Member/Officer:** Leader/  
Head of Customers, Communication and Marketing

**Report Author:** Team Leader - Tourism, Marketing and Events

**Title:** Denbighshire as a tourism and events location

---

### **1. What is the report about?**

To detail the work undertaken by the Tourism Team to promote and sell Denbighshire as a tourism and events location (Appendix 1 Tourism Overview 2016-17, Appendix 1B Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model-STEAM 2016 figures) with particular focus on partnership work with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the development and refinement of the Events Application Process and the innovation and development work undertaken.

### **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

Formulation of recommendations in relation to improving the Council's tourism, marketing and events work ahead of the 2018 tourism season and to support the Council's strategic ambition for tourism in the county.

### **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That Scrutiny:

- 3.1 considers and comments on the contents of the report and associated appendices; and
- 3.2 if appropriate, formulates recommendations with a view to further developing the Council's strategic ambition for tourism in the county.

### **4. Report details**

#### **Partnership work**

Denbighshire Tourism Team works in partnership with local authority colleagues in Wrexham and Flintshire under the banner of North East Wales (Marketing Areas) to draw visitors to the region. Meetings take place on a monthly basis and are also attended by officers from the AONB. This partnership activity enables us to draw down significant funding for marketing activity from Welsh Government. For example, this year Denbighshire led a successful bid for funding of £40,000 (Appendix 2 North East Wales PR and Appendix 3 Press Coverage 2017) to promote the region under the theme of Year of the Sea 2018. Furthermore, this approach enables us to be part of a wider promotional offer funded through Visit Wales. This coordinated approach has played a part in the growing reputation

of North Wales as a prime tourism destination. Lonely Planet designated North Wales as “top ten” destination in the world for 2017. At present we are using this to promote our region in London on a specially decorated taxi, as part of a North Wales campaign. (Appendix 4 Taxi Campaign)

Without this partnership approach it would be impossible to access funding and put bids into Welsh Government. By leading on these bids we can ensure that key messages about Denbighshire have national coverage.

We currently fund two Tourist Information Centres (Rhyl and Llangollen) which are managed by North Wales Tourism. We’ve recently agreed to fund these for the next three years as part of our commitment to the visitor experience in Denbighshire. We see the value of these centres in providing good quality information and dispersing visitors around the county. We have also opened, in partnership, a number of Tourist Information Points in Denbighshire (Loggerheads, Nova and Rhug Farm (Appendix 5 Rhug TIP) to provide sustainable information provision across the county. The most recent TIP at Rhug was a good example of partnership working between the authority, Corwen Business Group and Rhug Estates.

The Tourism Team plays a significant role in Denbighshire’s Destination Management (DM) approach. This is a good example of the importance we place on external partnership working. This grassroots-led approach comprises a twice-yearly Tourism Forum, a Destination Partnership led by tourism businesses and a DM Liaison Group where the Partnership Chair meets with senior DCC officers (and Lead Member).

<http://www.discoverdenbighshire.wales/denbighshire-tourism-forum-09-05-17/>

Other members of the DM Partnership include AONB officers. The AONB is a key player at all levels within the Destination Management set-up: attending the Tourism Forum; represented by officers at the DM Partnership; attending DM Liaison Group meetings and included in work generated by the process (for example a recently set up Car Parks Task and Finish Group looking at issues in Moel Famau and visitor information).

### **Development and Refinement of the Events Process**

The Tourism Team are the administrators of the council’s event application process. This approach was adopted to improve the experience of event organisers when dealing with the local authority. Currently, event organisers can contact the Tourism Team directly and will be provided with an events application form. They return it to our team and we then forward it to the relevant departments within the authority. Event application forms and a useful toolkit are also available on-line:

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/visitor/things-to-do/whatson/holding-an-event.aspx>

There have been two iterations of the process since it was introduced in 2015. In early 2017 the Tourism Team decided to refine the process further. Engagement was carried out with DCC officers and event organisers. The feedback from this exercise revealed a number of key findings:

- The majority of those involved felt it was positive to have an initial point of contact
- The current application form was too long and needed simplification

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July a paper was presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which made the following recommendations:

1. Move away from an application process to a notification process
2. Maintain single point of entry for event organisers but encourage services and event organisers to deal directly with each other once this has been established
3. Enable direct engagement between event organisers and relevant officers/departments/services at DCC from an agreed list

This approach was agreed by SLT and we will work in partnership with officers within DCC and event organisers to put this into place over the coming months.

The aims of this approach will be to offer more effective support for communities to hold successful events

### **Innovation and Development Work**

The Tourism Team's role is, to a certain extent, two-fold. They promote the area using digital products currently around the "Year Of" themes (Appendix 6 Social Media Activity North East Wales, Appendix 7 Social Media Activity Discover Denbighshire). They then work to ensure that the visitor gets a first-class welcome and great quality information provision to enhance their experience whilst in Denbighshire.

Over the last two years they have created digital booklets and films marketed directly to potential visitors who have indicated an interest in visiting this area. We've ensured that our films are promoted through social media and via our websites.

<http://www.northeastwales.wales/listings/year-of-legends/>

For the last two years our team has operated a successful Tourism Ambassador Scheme. We have run learning journeys, workshops and other engagement activity to increase local knowledge and create opportunities for networking and sharing of best practice. Funding for this scheme came through Welsh Government as part of our North East Wales partnership working. More recently we have successfully applied for Rural Development Programme funding (£22,400) to create a more web-based modular scheme. This will begin in late 2017 and run until March 2019. As it's web-based it will enable a broader participation and is a more sustainable model. Learning Journeys and workshops will also be part of the new scheme as will an opportunity for businesses to mentor each other.

**5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- An attractive and protected environment that supports communities' wellbeing and economic prosperity
- Raise the profile of the county as a place to hold outdoor events that capitalise on our unique environment (sport, culture, arts, food, etc.), and Denbighshire CC as a supportive partner to organisers of both professional and community-led events.

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

Not Applicable

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

Not Applicable

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

Not Applicable

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

Not Applicable

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

Not Applicable

**11. Power to make the Decision**

Section 7.4.1 (e) of the Council's Constitution states that Scrutiny can consider the impact of policies to assess if they have made a difference whilst Section 7.4.2 stipulates that Scrutiny can review and scrutinise the work of Council services and arising from the review process make recommendations to improve outcomes.

**Contact Officer:**

Team Leader - Tourism, Marketing and Events

Tel: 01824 706152