



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: *Wendy Ulyett*

Tel: 0114 273 4125

Report of: *Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures*

Report to: *Economic Development & Skills Committee*

Date of Decision: *15/06/2023*

Subject: *South Yorkshire LVEP application, led by Sheffield City Council (Marketing Sheffield)*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 1396				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				

Purpose of Report:

This report proposes that Sheffield City Council's Marketing Sheffield service submits an application for Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) accreditation in June 2023 via the VisitEngland formal process.

This will need to be submitted as a South Yorkshire LVEP application - following our submission of an Expression of Interest in January 2023. Feedback from the national tourism agency (VisitEngland) identified our lack of geographical coverage as a single destination management organisation and that a wider – South Yorkshire – partnership arrangement would more readily meet the criteria.

Since then, work has been undertaken across South Yorkshire, and with SYMCA, to agree a partnership arrangement that will be led by Sheffield City Council through its existing Marketing Sheffield Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) function.

Leading a South Yorkshire LVEP will:

- **Not** formally change the nature of Marketing Sheffield's wider remit.

- Help us capitalise on Marketing Sheffield’s current successful work for the benefit of the Sheffield and the wider South Yorkshire visitor economy for 2023 and beyond.
- Be the starting point for more significant private sector engagement around visitor economy promotion.
- Allow Sheffield and South Yorkshire to apply for national funding schemes administered via Visit England as and when they become available.
- Allow strategic support from Visit England, allow our involvement in national strategy development and in Visit Britain/Visit England marketing and other activity.
- Allow Sheffield & South Yorkshire to be at the forefront on developing national and international audiences and reputation.
- Strengthen SCC’s relationship with SYMCA – particularly Marketing Sheffield and SYMCA External Affairs & the local authorities in this area by providing expertise and access to the national framework.

Recommendations:

To agree the following

1. *that Marketing Sheffield leads on the submission of an LVEP application to VisitEngland*
2. *for Sheffield City Council to be established as the accountable body on behalf of South Yorkshire in delivering the requirements*
3. *to note the need to establish an operational structure which supports the delivery of the LVEP and seeks SYMCA financial resources as a mechanism for creating the required structure.*
4. *to note the development of Sheffield’s draft Destination Management Plan required as part of the accreditation process*

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: James Lyons
	Legal: Patrick Chisholm
	Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
	Climate: Jessica Rick
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	

2	EMT member who approved submission:	Kate Martin
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Martin Smith
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Diana Buckley Wendy Ulyett Emma France	Job Title: Director – Economy, Skills and Culture Marketing Manager – Visitor Economy Service Manager – Marketing Sheffield
	Date: 2 nd June 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

This proposal follows the 18th January 2023 approval by this committee to submit to VisitEngland an expression of interest in the likelihood of submitting an application for Local Visitor Economy Partnership status.

This proposal recommends that we move forwards with a full application to the national tourist board and for Sheffield to lead on the LVEP on behalf of South Yorkshire.

1.1 Background

The visitor economy is hugely important to Sheffield.

Sheffield is already a successful visitor destination but there is an opportunity to attract more visitors to benefit local businesses, residents and communities.

Recent high profile events (e.g. Women’s European Football 2022 & Eurovision Official Party 2023) have positively reinforced our understanding of the impact of engaging communities in

- animating the city
- increasing footfall and dwell time
- -supporting businesses
- presenting an inclusive and accessible destination.

Sheffield’s visitor economy already makes a valuable contribution to the success and prosperity of the wider economy. In 2019, Sheffield attracted 17.92 million leisure and business tourism

visits. In total, £1.37 billion was estimated to have been generated directly and indirectly within Sheffield's economy through visitor and tourism business expenditure. This activity and expenditure supported 15,076 full-time equivalent ('FTE') jobs in Sheffield. The number of FTE jobs supported by the visitor economy is estimated to be c. 7% of total FTE jobs in Sheffield.

Attracting more leisure and business day visitors and staying visitors, and their spending, to Sheffield should generate additional income for local businesses, support business productivity and profitability, create, support and safeguard local employment, and generate other positive economic and social impacts.

As the local Destination Management Organisation ('DMO'), Marketing Sheffield plays a key role in supporting the visitor economy. Marketing Sheffield is part of Sheffield City Council's City Futures portfolio. Its tourism-related activities include place management, product development, branding and promotion and bidding for conferences and events.

In 4 years to 2021, Marketing Sheffield successfully bid for £700,000 funding from VisitBritain VisitEngland, to work specifically on a European City Break campaign targeting audiences in Netherlands and Germany and using Sheffield's Outdoor City brand.

1.2 The visitor economy landscape is changing nationally and locally.

In July, UK Government published its response to an independent review ("the de Bois Review"), of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), which presents opportunities for Sheffield & South Yorkshire, and other England destinations, to improve visitor destination management & marketing arrangements and activities. The review made certain recommendations, accepted by UK Government, which included the creation of a tiered, accredited approach to the national DMO landscape.

The full review can be [found here](#) but the relevant summary is the suggestion of a three tiered approach to engagement and funding with, and via DCMS and VisitBritain VisitEngland.

Full URL:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1011664/2585-C_The_de_Bois_Review_ACCESSIBLE__for_publication_.pdf

Tier 1 suggests a small number of Destination Development Partnerships (DDPs) which will be formed through partnerships of LVEPs and following a pilot project which will run for 2 years in Northeast England.

Tier 2 requires circa 40 Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) which will be accredited and supported by VisitEngland

Tier 3 will be those Destination Management/Marketing Organisations (DMOs), likely to be local authority tourism departments or commercial functions.

Tier 3 DMOs will have no direct engagement with VisitEngland.

In Sheffield, like many visitor destinations, the local authority has taken a leading role in visitor destination management and marketing.

However, local authorities have faced severe financial pressures over recent years. This has created challenges in relation to funding. Across the UK, destinations are looking at ways to fund the growth of their visitor economies in the future.

In response to this and against the backdrop of change, SCC (Marketing Sheffield) has commissioned a formal Review of Destination Management and Marketing which identifies and analyses viable, bespoke options for the future funding of visitor destination marketing and management in Sheffield (in consultation with local and national stakeholders). Sheffield City Council is keen to examine future funding options that will help grow Sheffield's visitor economy, so that it further supports the growth and prosperity of the City's overall economy.

In 2022, the World Travel and Tourism Council's latest economic impact report indicated that the tourism sector in the UK is expected to create nearly 700,000 new jobs over the next decade. The forecast is for the industry's contribution to GDP to reach a value of more than £214billion (circa 10% of the total economic GDP). Employment in the sector is expected to grow to 4million jobs.

Building on Sheffield's strong relationship with VisitBritain VisitEngland* will support the aspirations of Sheffield & South Yorkshire to increase the region's share of the market. Without LVEP status, the city will not be able to work with the national tourism agency to increase our share of this industry growth. Put simply, Sheffield does not have the resource to perform on an international tourism stage without the backing of VisitBritain.

*VisitBritain VisitEngland is the national tourist board full name. VisitBritain supports international marketing, VisitEngland supports marketing campaigns and industry support across the domestic territory.

Achieving LVEP accreditation is critical to if we want to reach international visitors.

1.3 The current position and way forward

In January 2023, and following a report presented to EDS Committee, SCC's Marketing Sheffield submitted an Expression of Interest to VisitEngland showing our intention to submit an application for accreditation to LVEP status.

Feedback received from VisitEngland was that whilst it was clear most of the criteria would be met, as a city DMO Marketing Sheffield did not have the geographical coverage required by VisitEngland and therefore we should engage with our local sub-regional organisation(s).

As a core city, it is imperative that Sheffield is included in the LVEP programme. The city cannot afford to lose ground on being recognised as a destination of choice by the national tourism agency, nor put at risk the future opportunities to access funding to support the visitor economy from national agencies.

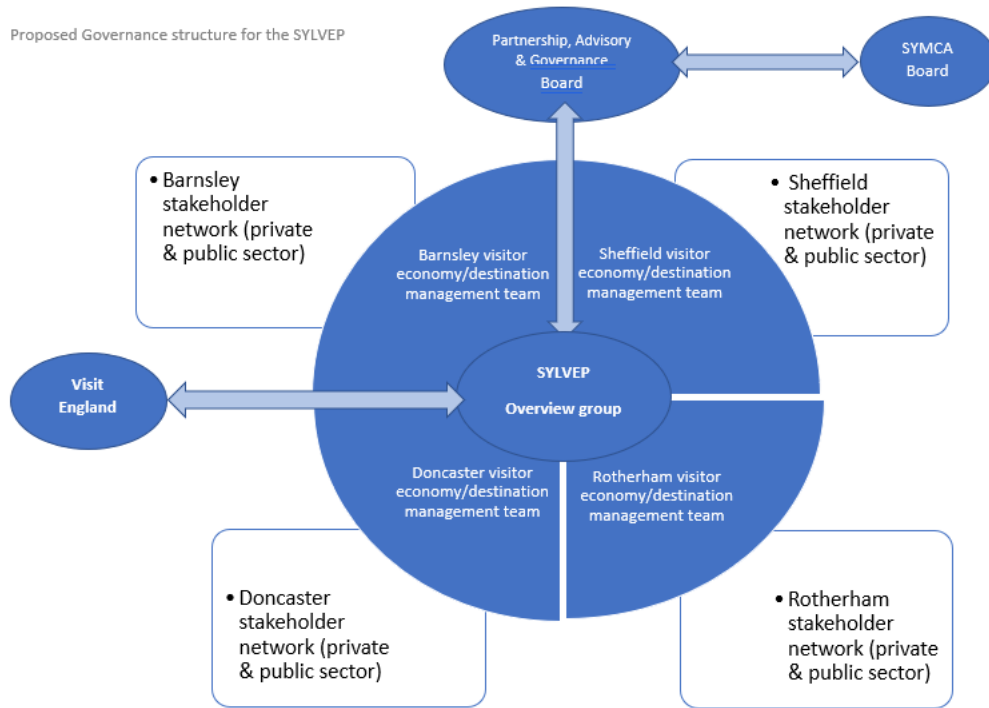
Since then, a DMO Overview Group (comprised of tourism leads from the four local authorities and SYMCA) has been brought together. Sheffield has played a pivotal role. The outcome of this work is to establish a South Yorkshire LVEP with Sheffield leading the partnership with VisitEngland and Sheffield City Council being the accountable body to the South Yorkshire authorities and SYMCA.

With no financial contribution from LAs required at this stage, the LVEP will be delivered as a working partnership thus amplifying the combined efforts of existing teams. Sheffield will continue to speak to its own private sector partners, and Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham will do likewise but all will communicate about the LVEP with a shared voice and agreed narrative.

SYMCA has indicated a willingness to support with funding and resource to build capacity and manage the establishment of a governance structure and formal operating principles.

The governance structure does not need to be formally agreed at the application stage, but evidence of consideration and a draft plan being in place will support the application. Our current thinking for the structure of the LVEP is as below:

Proposed Governance structure for the SYLVEP



The application process & timeline

Visit England has introduced a rolling timetable to allow applications to be submitted at any time. At the time of this paper being prepared, 15 LVEPs have been announced.

Upon submission of an application, there is a turnaround of 4-6 weeks before 'awarded' status is announced.

The online application process is a mix of narrative and evidence – including visualisations of existing structures and commitment; governance structures and stakeholder networks; letters of support from elected members and Chief Officers of all local authorities and SYMCA. Our intention is to submit an application during July.

Accreditation

The accreditation process was shared with Committee in January, and since then Marketing Sheffield staff have been working hard to ensure we can meet these criteria.

As part of this process a new Destination Management Plan (DMP) at Sheffield and South Yorkshire level is required. Sheffield have kick started this work, and attached as a draft in appendix 1 is a draft DMP for Sheffield. We wanted EDS Committee Members to be aware of this work, however this will return to committee for formal approval separately after further consultation with Members.

A draft of the LVEP application will also be shared with Member ahead of submission for final approval. Circulated in draft as Appendix 2 before the committee following this paper.

Reminder of Criteria

Core Criteria Will ensure recognised LVEPs are stable and high performing, with experience of operating at a strategic level. LVEPs will need to demonstrate they meet all of these criteria (and provide evidence)	Growth Criteria Will strengthen organisation performance and resilience going forward and enable local visitor economy growth. They align with national strategy and priorities to build collaboration and achieve greater impact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers an important geography (such as a county or city region) which avoids overlap with other LVEPs and can demonstrate the importance of its visitor economy 	When becoming part of the programme, LVEPs will commit to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding income and diversifying funding streams Developing the skills of their team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a Destination Management Plan (DMP) or tourism strategy, developed in consultation with local public and private sector partners Is engaged in destination 'management' as well as marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring governance reflects the visitor economy and shows diversity Developing a comprehensive business support offer (directly or through partners)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is well integrated with important local and regional actors Can demonstrate commitment from local government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting national and government initiatives and priorities such as Levelling Up, accessibility and sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the ability to raise funding from the private sector Is stable and resilient and can administer public funding with probity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the ability to track the local visitor economy through research and data, gathering and sharing insights and working with VisitEngland on new data models and approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works in partnership with other DMOs in its own geography and beyond with other LVEPs 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Its capacity reflects the size and importance of the destination 	

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 As a partner in an accredited LVEP, Sheffield will be in a better position to grow the volume and value of visitors to Sheffield, whilst also supporting added benefit in South Yorkshire. This would further enhance the visitor economy's contribution to the wider economy, as well as open-up opportunities for building sub-regional partnerships focusing on growing the visitor economy, including the SYMCA.

A successful visitor economy directly contributes to the strategic goals identified in SCC's delivery plan for economic growth:

- Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis: Sheffielders live in a city where inequality and discrimination are actively challenged, respect and diversity are valued and we strive to make our economy and our city work better for everyone
- Clean economic growth: Sheffield seizes on the opportunity for clean, sustainable and inclusive growth and supports an innovative and creative city economy with thriving businesses and good jobs

Furthermore, development of the visitor economy supports the priorities of the Business Recovery Plan as it:

- Stimulates demand in the local economy
- Stimulates investment in culture to help rebuild confidence and visitor numbers

It would provide a platform for Sheffield to look to a revised long-term structure, funding and governance arrangement for visitor destination management and marketing to build on the great work already done.

Should we not be part of a partnership and accredited LVEP Sheffield 'loses its seat' at the table within the new national framework.

Sheffield will disappear from the national agenda for tourism.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 As part of our SCC review of destination management and marketing arrangements we have consulted both internally and with external partners (local and national). We have expressed the intention for Sheffield to move towards a more public private sector arrangement and to move forwards with the LVEP process during that consultation. Feedback has been wholly positive.

The proposal for a South Yorkshire LVEP with Sheffield as the lead organisation has been tabled at SYMCA Leaders meetings and support for the proposal has been agreed at the MCA Board meeting on 5th June 2023.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and highlights that the work of Marketing Sheffield promotes the city as a diverse and inclusive destination. It also brings additional campaign opportunities to work with services such as 'AccessAble Sheffield' to identify Sheffield as an accessible destination.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There is no cost related to the submission of the application process process with Visit England and DCMS. Officer time from within existing duties will be used to complete the process. Additional funding to support the work of the LVEP will be from SYMCA and appropriate external funding arrangements will be agreed.

The true opportunity costs are the potential loss of opportunity to work in collaboration with Visit Britain Visit England (the national tourist board) to promote Sheffield as a city break destination and the loss of opportunity to apply to Visit England for funding streams to create effective marketing campaigns for domestic and international audiences.

4.3 Legal Implications

There is no legal requirement to apply for Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) accreditation. However the Authority has the power under section 144 to promote tourism and encourage visitors and this

step would fall within that power. Legal advice can be provided as required as the application progresses.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Whilst this specific decision does not have any direct climate implications it does present some opportunities to enable us to embed some key impacts on the city's Visitor Economy. Having LVEP status will allow us to access to Visit Britain's Sustainable Business and Net Zero Toolkit, Training and Advice hub. This will allow us to align to the national strategies and complement localised campaigns. This will include us focussing on key categories including Transport - encouraging visitor economy businesses to promote active travel options to customers; Economy - supporting our local green economy, encouraging venues and attractions to promote their green credentials; Influence – promoting Net Zero guidance with partners/venues; Resources – food & drink impacts as specific issues for events and at visitor attractions.

4.5 Other Implications

N/A

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Sheffield City Council could choose not to follow the guidance of the national tourism agency and proceed with a Local Visitor Economy Partnership with a geographical spread of the city's boundary. Such an application is not likely to be accepted and Sheffield will lose its seat at the table within the new national framework. Sheffield will not be included in the national agenda for tourism impacting both national and domestic marketing opportunities.
- 5.2 Sheffield City Council could choose not to accept the government recommendations from the de Bois review and step back from this accreditation process. This will stop the city's aspirations of becoming a European city break destination as existing resources are not sufficient.

6. Reasons for Recommendations

- Inclusion in the national and regional tourism agenda, and opportunities to access match-funded or grant-funded tourism campaigns will be lost if Sheffield does not pursue LVEP status as part of a South Yorkshire partnership approach.

- Sheffield would lose strategic support from Visit England, involvement in national strategy development or involvement in Visit Britain/Visit England marketing and other activity.
- There is no alternative existing structure across South Yorkshire that could lead such a partnership and therefore the subregion would not be part of the new national framework.
- Marketing Sheffield has achieved much success even within tight budgets. The small but highly experienced team has achieved many successes through creative work with partners which could be scaled up with the right support. LVEP status will help us capitalise on this work for the benefit of the Sheffield visitor economy for 2023 and beyond.
- It will create a catalyst for more significant private sector engagement
- It will allow Sheffield, via the South Yorkshire LVEP, to apply for national funding schemes managed by VisitEngland as and when they become available
- It will allow for strategic support from VisitEngland, involvement in national strategy development and involvement in VisitBritain VisitEngland marketing and other activities
- It allows Sheffield to lead the way with South Yorkshire on developing national and international audiences and reputation
- It will strengthen SCCs relationship with SYMCA and the local authorities in this area by providing expertise and access to the national framework
- It is the first step to addressing the challenges within the current Marketing Sheffield structure (financial and capacity).