

**To:** Future Oxfordshire Partnership

**Title of Report:** Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Report of:** Helen Ryan-Wallis, Programme Manager Strategy, OxLEP

**Status:** Open

**Executive Summary and Purpose:**

To present the draft final Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan (DMP) (subject to OxLEP Board approval expected by 23 October) for information, and for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to endorse the proposed future governance arrangements for DMP activity within the Partnership.

**How this report contributes to the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision Outcomes:**

Through successful delivery of the DMP Oxfordshire's 'rich and distinctive internationally recognised heritage assets, visitor economy and vibrant cultural offer will be enhanced' (linked to guiding principle 5) and shared strategic activities can ensure a more diverse access and enjoyment of them. The DMP destination management actions can support the 'high quality place offer where people wish to live, work, visit and invest'. Also achieving the vision of the DMP to achieve sustainable growth of Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy will assist FOP in achieving the following 2050 outcomes:

**Outcome: Our vibrant historic and cultural offer will be rich, diverse and enhanced:**

Sustainable growth of Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy will assist FOP in achieving the following 2050 outcomes: *Our vibrant historic and cultural offer will be rich, diverse and enhanced; Our natural environment will be in a better state than that in which we found it; Our residents will be healthier and happier, and overall wellbeing will have improved.*

**Outcome: Our residents will be healthier and happier, and overall wellbeing will have improved:**

Actions to enable the visitor economy to be more inclusive, accessible will enable more of our local residents to support and spend in visitor economy related businesses, enjoy more of our countryside offers and urban experiences. The Visitor Economy not only supports a broad range of businesses and organisations, it offers valuable local employment at all skills levels whilst providing well-being activities and cultural opportunities for local residents and visitors.

**Recommendations:**

- a) **FOP notes the Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan as a shared statement of intent to manage Oxfordshire as a destination over the next five years.**
- b) **FOP to endorse the proposed future governance arrangements for DMP activity within the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.**

**Appendices:**

- Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan
- Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan Baseline Report

## **Introduction**

1. The Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a key part of the COMF funded Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme. During the preparation of the bid to secure the COMF funding for the sector, it was recognised that there wasn't a shared vision or collective set of actions that a wide range of partners could look to work towards achieving to support the visitor economy. Also at that time, there were forthcoming changes in the national landscape of Destination Management Organisations becoming Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), and a shared plan was considered beneficial for all.

## **Oxfordshire Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan (DMP)**

2. The DMP covers a five year period to 2028 and is a shared commitment to develop, manage and market Oxfordshire to bring benefits to business, local communities, visitors and the environment.
3. The DMP is supported by a robust evidence report which contains a detailed market and trend analysis, consideration of the strategic, local, regional, and national priorities and extensive engagement with the sector. It also has an agreed shared vision to 'achieve sustainable growth through encouraging longer stays, year-round and generating more value from visitors coming to Oxfordshire'. The DMP outlines three key recommended action areas: marketing, smart and sustainable development, and destination management which are considered to achieve the greatest impact for Oxfordshire. Within those three action areas are various recommended actions that would require a wide range of partners to help deliver.

## **Proposed future governance arrangements for the DMP**

4. Chapter eight in the DMP describes that '*a renewed partnership approach to managing, marketing and developing the destination is needed to support delivery of this DMP and make the most of the opportunities for Oxfordshire*'. The successful delivery of the DMP is not in the gift of one organisation and will require a collaborative approach to partnership that recognises the different strengths and roles of each stakeholder. Destination management is a partnership approach which will need both our Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), public sector partners, private business, education and national bodies to all play their part.
5. Therefore, OxLEP proposes a future role for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) to convene the different partners with the DMP being nested within FOP and to provide overall oversight and monitoring of the DMP within Oxfordshire. Following on from the recent FOP workshop held on 26 September 2023, it is suggested that the DMP would fall within the proposed and emerging economy reporting part of the full FOP agenda with representatives from both LVEPs in attendance. It is also suggested that the FOP Executive Officers Group (EOG) could become the officer forum with the frequency of the DMP at these to be determined (possibly every 2-3 months). This would ensure alignment with the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire, and the FOP vision and objectives.
6. FOP would also assist in helping to identify funding and resources before progressing priorities which are currently unfunded and there is no default

assumption that partners can absorb the recommended actions and priorities identified in the DMP. The separately commissioned funding strategy will be developed alongside this DMP to propose potential sources of funding. OxLEP will continue to support FOP, providing a link to the wider economy, local business and also to Government objectives and potential funding programmes.

7. OxLEP believes that this will allow for a whole system approach to destination management of Oxfordshire with a collective commitment to ensure successful delivery of the DMP and continued support for this key sector.

### **Financial Implications**

8. There are no immediate financial implications associated with the content of this report. Delivery of the actions listed in the DMP will require resource and funding to be secured.

### **Legal Implications**

9. There are no immediate legal implications associated with the content of this report.

### **Other Implications**

10. There are no other implications.

### **Conclusion**

11. This report has provided the FOP with the draft final version of the Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan, and the associated Baseline (evidence) report. Two recommendations have been presented to the FOP to take note of.

### **Background Papers**

12. There are none relating to this report.

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