

## SPECIFICATION

### **TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT: CHESHIRE EAST BOROUGH COUNCIL**

#### **1. Introduction**

Cheshire East Borough Council is seeking a Destination Management Organisation (DMO) to deliver a visitor economy activity plan in support of its visitor economy strategy for Cheshire East and the area's destination management.

The Destination Management Organisation will be expected to:

- Be recognised as a DMO by Visit England/Visit Britain
- Have the ability to be a partnership organisation that is able to represent the interests of its members/partners and the visitor economy/tourism sector in Cheshire East and the sub-region and can demonstrate a high level of skill in developing and managing such partnerships.
- Have the ability to provide for appropriate representation of Cheshire East Council on the Governance Board that pertain to the DMO's sectoral support relevant to Cheshire East
- Take a strategic approach for the better management of the destination and is a strategic leader in destination development.
- Lead and coordinate activities under a coherent strategy, being able to take a leadership role in the sector within Cheshire East and in a sub-regional context, in order to encourage professional standards and the development of cooperative arrangements which maximise industry effectiveness.
- Identify opportunities and facilitate projects to maximise the availability and effective use of resources to the benefit of the sector in the sub-region in order to deliver the visitor economy strategy for Cheshire East
- Engage in activity, including destination marketing, relations with the industry, research, and project delivery to help deliver the Cheshire East strategy and incorporate that strategy in the DMO's Destination Management Plan to increase the economic value of the sector through visitor numbers, length of stay and visitor expenditure by positioning the sub-region (including Cheshire east) as a destination with distinct and competitive visitor offers.

The contract period will operate from the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020; the fee payable for this period will be £70,000 and then £50,000 for the next two years. Detailed below are elements that the successful organisation will be expected to achieve.

#### **2. Context**

Cheshire East's visitor economy makes an important contribution to the economy, employment and quality of life of Cheshire East. As a Local authority, Cheshire East has a key role in developing the visitor economy's local growth potential through playing a strong leadership role and catalyst for growth; creating the conditions for it to thrive, setting the planning context, investing in infrastructure, improving skills and incentivising inward investment. Cheshire East can also ensure there is a rich cultural offer to attract visitors, pulling in visitors through the area's events, arts and heritage and helping to support both

vibrant towns and the rural setting. The Council also has an important role in helping coordinate the activities of stakeholders across the destination and working with partners to achieve growth.

With regards to activity with Cheshire East Council, the successful organisation's key working relationships are through the Visitor Economy and Economic Development Teams in delivery of strategic priorities. Building on the visitor economy strategy (2016-2020) and plans in place with regards to Tourism and Visitor Economy work, the successful organisation will provide support for sector growth, destination management and inward investment. That will provide measurable activity that can be delivered in partnership with Cheshire East Council to help achieve the Council's objectives and outcomes. An activity plan for the year will guide use of resources, set out priority actions and provide a framework for any local commissioning in line with the 'Growth' agenda and Visitor Economy Strategic priorities.

The successful organisation will dedicate appropriate staff resources and provide 'key account' contacts. An activity plan for the year will guide use of these resources and local commissioning in line with Cheshire East's Strategic priorities and delivery as described below. Additional project work may be made available to the successful provider through the normal procurement routes or by separate agreement.

In addition, European, National and other external funding could be attracted by the successful provider to support some of the activity outlined below, (e.g. including 'Discover England', ERDF and LEADER projects or applications). Due to the nature of such external funding and the fact that it is generally targeted at rural areas means that Cheshire East based businesses benefit from these initiatives.

### 3. Outline of Sub-Regional Activity

#### Strategic Drivers

In delivering its business plan and day to day work, the successful company will need to strategically position itself for being able to be uniquely placed working closely with both the public and private sectors. The successful organisation will need to pursue delivery of the strategic priorities and themes set out in the Cheshire East Visitor Economy Strategy. These are outlined below:



The strategic themes encompass the most promising and forward-looking opportunities for growth in Cheshire East. The 'Communities of interest' these priorities create will guide related action plans partnerships and project development over the period.



#### 4. Additional specific services to Cheshire East

In addition to meeting the DMO criteria set out above, the organisation should also include the following key components:

- A destination management plan that addresses and supports the key themes and priorities set out in the Cheshire East visitor economy strategy.
- Management and utilisation of an appropriate destination management system, related location digital channels and publications with the goal of driving increased profile and visitors for the destination,
- Creating opportunities to showcase investment or business engagement,
- Work with partners to create tourism campaigns designed to “sell” Cheshire East to key audiences.
- Active engagement in delivery of external funding opportunities for the sector.
- Representing Cheshire East and its visitor economy with Visit England, Visit Britain, Northern Powerhouse and the C&W LEP and other related organisations.
- Regular structured face to face meetings with stakeholders, partner organisations and the Cheshire East Council visitor Economy Team

- Facilitation and support for a visitor economy forum to support communication and represent the interests of the sector in strategy delivery.
- The provider must have the ICT ability to “talk” to the New Minds Destination Management System
- The provider must have a demonstrable working knowledge of the Cheshire East Tourism Sector, its components and businesses, its needs and opportunities.

In addition the strategic priorities shown at appendix 1 will identify activities covered by the core funding. The activity plan will also direct the priorities for action at a local level, which if not covered by the activity plan may be considered, where appropriate, for any additional payments that may be agreed or procured in the normal way. These will be linked to delivery of strategic objectives for Cheshire East (e.g. Visitor Economy and Economic Development Strategies), including sector support, marketing and performance monitoring (e.g. STEAM data). This will be delivered by the successful organisation with the support of Cheshire East Council and the organisation’s other partners for the contract period.

**Statistical Breakdown of the Visitor Economy in Cheshire East:**

	<b>STEAM 2015</b>	<b>INCREASE SINCE 2009</b>	<b>INCREASE 2014 - 2015</b>
<b>Economic activity of visitor economy in Cheshire East</b>	£842m	54.8%	4.4%
<b>Visitor Numbers to Cheshire East</b>	15.23m	29.4%	4.2%
<b>Visitor Days spent in Cheshire East</b>	16.87m	28.3%	4.0%
<b>Total fte Employment in Visitor Economy in CE</b>	11,100	28.9%	2.3%
<b>Economic Impact in Serviced Accommodation</b>	£180m	45.4%	-0.9%
<b>Numbers staying in Serviced Accommodation</b>	813k	22.0%	-3.5%

**Delivery/Contract Management**

Development of partnership working will be continued via a visitor economy forum, existing business clusters, liaison with CEC officers and project teams. The successful provider will be based within their own offices however there will be occasions when they will be required to hot desk at Tatton Park. A core liaison group aims to meet on a monthly basis to agree, review, monitor and direct the activity plan priorities, communicate successes and provide direction. The budget as outlined will provide sufficient support to allow the organisation to manage the activity strategically over the length of the contract. For Cheshire East it will mean that in addition to the work that will be undertaken at a sub-regional level, that there will be resources available for specific Cheshire East priorities and this will help develop and grow

the existing relationship to provide the basis for further opportunities in future years. This will be funded through a combination of the core and locally commissioned work under this agreement. To deliver this the successful provider will identify Account Managers and qualified staff working regularly at hub offices in Cheshire East.

The Cheshire East strategic priorities are therefore listed as follows.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Cheshire East SLA 2017 – 2020**

Strategic Priorities required to be delivered:

- To promote Cheshire East key attractions
- To improve the quality, coordination and marketing of cultural events and festivals
- To develop a distinctive rural tourism offer
- To Significantly Increase Leisure And Business Visits From international visitors
- To Promote Cheshire East's Unique Heritage And Science Tourism
- To Increase Demand For Food Tourism
- To Position Cheshire East As a Convenient And Desirable Business Tourism Destination

## **5. Social Value**

Visitor Economy has the potential to positively impact on the life of Cheshire East residents. Through the following objectives social values will be met through:

Promote employment and economic sustainability – tackle unemployment and facilitate the development of skills

- Raise the living standards of local residents – working towards living wage, maximise employee access to entitlements such as childcare and encourage suppliers to source labour from within Cheshire East
- Promote participation and citizen engagement – encourage resident participation and promote active citizenship
- Build the capacity and sustainability of the voluntary and community sector– practical support for local voluntary and community groups
- Promote equity and fairness – target effort towards those in the greatest need or facing the greatest disadvantage and tackle deprivation across the borough
- Promote environmental sustainability – reduce wastage, limit energy consumption and procure materials from sustainable sources

## **6. Implementation**

A Destination management System must be in place that is compatible with the current New MIND DMS within 1 month on the contract being awarded. This needs to include all Cheshire East tourism businesses, known events, places to go and where to stay in the area.