

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	19 May 2005
Subject:	Tourism Strategy
Responsible Officer:	Group Manager, Communications
Contact Officer:	Linzi Clark
Portfolio Holder:	Communications, Partnership and Human Resources Education and Lifelong Learning
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

## **Section 1: Summary**

### **Decision Required**

Cabinet is asked to endorse the Tourism Strategy

### **Reason for report**

Cabinet provided one off funding in 2004 for the appointment of a Tourism Officer for one year to write a Tourism Strategy for Harrow and to assist in launching tourism initiatives and promotional projects.

### **Benefits**

Improved tourism has economic benefits and creates enhanced civic pride among residents. A Tourism Strategy is in line with the council objective of Putting Harrow on the Map.

## **Cost of Proposals**

The cost of producing the strategy has been met within existing resources. Please see financial comments below.

## **Risks**

None

## **Implications if recommendations rejected**

Harrow will not be able to compete with the rapidly advancing tourism offer in other London boroughs and any short term tactical gains during the initial trial period in 2005 will not lead to any long term success in Harrow's future development as a visitor destination.

## **Section 2: Report**

### **2.1 Brief History**

Tourism is of increasing importance to west London. Visitors create jobs and support a range of facilities such as hotels, restaurants, places to visit, events and retailing. Recent research in Ealing, Hounslow and Hillingdon estimates the value of tourism to west London in 2001 as £1.26 billion. It accounts for ten per cent of London's GDP

The Mayor of London has recently published a tourism strategy for London which aims to encourage the dispersal of visitors away from central London to the outer boroughs. Harrow has much to offer such visitors, particularly with its cultural and historic attractions, open spaces and ethnic diversity.

The council recognised this potential and in February 2005 employed a tourism officer on contract to consult with interested parties and consider how best to move forward on this important issue. This strategy is the first stage of her work.

### **2.3 Consultation**

Extensive consultation has taken place with hoteliers, arts and culture interests, transport operators, retailers and related business interests, voluntary groups including community and faith groups, members, other local authorities and tourist and regeneration bodies.

### **2.4 Financial Implications**

The costs of producing the Tourism Strategy have been met within existing approved budgets. Adopting the Tourism Strategy will not bind the Council to any future costs, however there are a number of areas within existing approved revenue and capital budgets (covering, among others, Tourism, Arts and Culture, Sports Development, Business Support and Regeneration) which will assist the Council in delivering the strategy.

## 2.5 Legal Implications

None

## 2.6 Equalities Impact

The strategy recognises the diversity in Harrow is a tourism strength. Separate consideration will be given to the requirements of disabled visitors and the suitability of Harrow's tourist attractions for those visitors

### **Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents**

Background Documents:

Tourism Strategy – circulated in the Cabinet Supporting Documents Pack.