

101265822  
Revision 01

## TOURISM WORKING GROUP

### NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	Tourism Working Group (TWG)
Date:	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
Location:	East Suffolk House
Chair:	Paul Wood (PW) (ESC)
Attendees:	Paul Wood, Marie Webster-Fitch (ESC), Matt Jones (SCC), David Scott, Annie Willey (The Suffolk Coast DMO), Paula Bartholomew (Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape), Julian Munson (NALEP), Rebecca Calder, Mike Humphrey (Sizewell C)
Apologies:	-

#### Meeting Notes:

##### 1. INTRODUCTIONS

##### 2. MEMBERSHIP

- PW defined membership i.e. a member can vote, an observer cannot. Membership is 2 SZC and 1 each SCC / ESC / DMO / NL / NALEP / VS.
- ESC Tourism Programme Manager has now been appointed – joining ESC April 24 - they will chair this working group meeting going forward.
- Discussion on VS attendance going forward given the current uncertainty on the future structure / role of that organisation. Agreed that this is a potentially useful role so desirable to keep this slot open - PW noted that there should be resolution on structure of tourism organisations Q4 2024.
- Replacement of NALEP member also discussed – given the functionality of the LEP is transferring to SCC, group agreed that this position would be closed rather than replaced.

**ACTION:** RC to follow up with Visit Suffolk on Deed of Covenant / future attendance.

**ACTION:** RC to speak to lawyers on process for nominating an alternative organisation.

##### 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Feedback from Economic Review Group – requested greater granularity on reporting and would like one attendee from SZC and Chair to attend the Group to provide update each time.
- SECHNL raised fact that there are various funds in the Deed of Obligation, some of which could overlap e.g. Natural Environmental, Transport, Tourist Accommodation – RC advised that Tourism Programme Manager role includes *“monitoring and reporting back to the Tourism Working Group on opportunities for complementary activities with other mitigation activities elsewhere in this Deed, and risks of duplication of funding”*. DMO noted importance of building marketing strategy into any initiatives – should be considered at outset. Tourism Programme Manager / Working Group may be able to support other funds on this.
- SCC asked where tourism accommodation strategy sits – the funding sits within Accommodation but ESC advised that role would fall within Tourism Programme Manager scope. The fund is to provide for ‘resilience’ for tourism accommodation.

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#### 4. PROJECT UPDATE

- SZC advised earthworks due to begin on main development site in April 24 – initially fairly small scale.
- B1122 resurfacing works also underway from March-April 24 – to mitigate noise and vibration effects along the road. Works occurring overnight to minimise disruption to transport network.
- Signage for SZC is already in place directing vehicles on the correct route to SZC – SZC to confirm if more permanent signage is proposed.
- DMO asked whether information could be made available to distribute to their members – advised that the SZC works tracker is available.

**ACTION:** Link to SZC works tracker to be provided [Post-meeting note: this may be found here [Home - Sizewell C Works Tracker \(szcworkstracker.co.uk\)](#)]

**ACTION:** SZC to provide further information on signage

#### 5. ESC RECRUITMENT UPDATE

- ESC advised that the SZC Tourism Programme Manager is due to start on 8th April 2024 – this will be Alexis Corless who joins from Maldon District Council in Essex, bringing both tourism and new nuclear experience.
- Tourism fund marketing manager to be recruited following the start of the Tourism Programme Manager.

#### 6. OTHER STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

##### DMO

- David Scott has taken over as Chair of the DMO so will be attending in place of Harry Young, the former Chair.
- The DMO Annual Conference has received good feedback. Noted that while the conference was more upbeat than in 2022, this was partly down to topics covered. Recruitment and staffing still challenging – concern that SZC may take workers away from local businesses. SZC noted that this feedback will be provided to the Supply Chain Working Group.
- Time is coming up to renew membership which provides an indication as to how business is going.
- Communication on the Tourism Fund has not been actioned yet to a great extent as waiting for clarity on who the money can go to / who can pitch for grants etc.

##### SECHNL

- National Environment Improvement Fund guidance being developed - grant giving being set up.
- Has been a bit of a slow start as the lines of responsibility have needed to be established: SZC noted that general approach of the Deed is for responsibility for allocation will sit with the experts (rather than SZC) as far as possible.

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#### NALEP / Councils

- NALEP staff and functionality being integrated into Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils. Separate economic strategies for the councils will be produced but will work closely to ensure the strategies align.
- Devolution consultation to run from March 18<sup>th</sup> – May 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Discussion that there are likely to be Local Visitor Economy Partnerships set up but exact structure not yet confirmed.

#### 7. DRAFT ANNUAL TOURISM FUND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- The draft ATFIP will be produced once the Tourism Programme Manager is in post but an interim document setting out some ideas for discussion was provided by ESC in advance of the meeting.
- However some money has already been spent for which retrospective funding was sought – this includes £3k for the DMO conference and approx. £10k for T-Stats data. The TWG could not achieve consensus, due to a member raising the concern that the process set out in the Deed of Obligation had not been followed i.e. ATFIP not yet in place.

**ACTION:** Matter to be escalated to Economic Review Group.

*[Post-meeting note: It has since been agreed by the signatories of the Deed of Obligation (SCC, ESC, SZC) that rather than escalate the requests for retrospective funding to the next Economic Review Group for approval, funding requests should not come forward until the first ATFIP is in place. Generally funds should have a presumption against retrospective funding but may allow retrospective proposals where a compelling case is made. For example, it may be that funding may be granted retrospectively for activities which are necessary for the proper functioning of the group or implementation plan.]*

- A general discussion was held on what visitor surveys should be undertaken and The DMO noted the need for visitor perceptions to be collected as well as T-stats data.
- It was also discussed that a distinction needs to be made between events which provide local community vs tourism benefits.
- Extending tourist seasons as well as spreading tourism around the county to other non-hotspot areas was discussed.
- Time ran out so an additional meeting was proposed for 18 April 2024 to continue the discussion to help inform the DATFIP and introduce the new Tourism Programme Manager as soon as she is in post.

#### 8. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting diarised for 18<sup>th</sup> April, 10am.

#### 9. AOB

None.

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#### Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
13 <sup>th</sup> March	1	RC to confirm status of Visit Suffolk membership of the group.	RC	For next meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> March	2	RC to seek legal advice on nominating an alternative organisation.	RC	For next meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> March	3	RC to provide link to SZC Works Tracker	RC	Link included in meeting note
13 <sup>th</sup> March	4	RC to seek more information on signage strategy.	RC	For next meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> March	5	Escalate retrospective funding requests to ERG.	ESC/DMO	Superseded – see section 7 above

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