

101499858

Revision 01

TOURISM WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	21 st March 2025, 10:00-11:30
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	Alexis Corless (ESC)
Attendees:	SZC: Rebecca Calder (RC), Mike Humphrey (MH) – (Observer) ESC: Alexis Corless (AC) Programme Manager , Marie Webster-Fitch (MWF) – (ESC) SCC: Matt Jones (MJ) The Suffolk Coast DMO: David Scott (DS), Jess Brown (JB) – (Observer), Julian Evans (JE) – (Observer) S&EC&HNL: Paula Bartholomew (PB)
Apologies:	

Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
12/11/2024	1	AC to organise additional perception study meeting	ESC	Closed
12/11/2024	2	RC to check if unsuccessful community fund projects can be shared	SZC	Next meeting

Meeting Notes:

Project Update

- SZC is moving from early site access to the start of construction at several sites.
- RC mentioned that the TVB and SLR are being built in middle field, making them less visible to tourists.
- SZC will be ramping up on main site this year, with progress expected in earthworks, temporary sea defences, the SSSI crossing and the installation of concrete platforms and accommodation blocks.
- Workforce surveys have been released, with results due within the next three months. From a front-end perspective, the workforce surveys will capture the DoO commitments by measuring the home-based workforce percentage, accommodation types, family relocation impacts, and transportation metrics. From a back-end perspective, the surveys will focus on improving workplace conditions, including health and safety.
- DS raised concerns about remuneration and the local labour market, noting competition with SZC could affect local businesses and tourism. RC confirmed that a union-agreed package will be implemented, covering accommodation and food costs for new arrivals, benchmarked against other national infrastructure projects.
- The goal is to provide Suffolk residents with better-skilled and higher-paying jobs. SZC estimates that at peak capacity, one-third of the workforce will be local, with the rest from outside the area. AC added that workstreams focused on skills development and business support are underway, with a business survey informing future support and grants to address local business needs.

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Tourism Mitigation Fund Implementation Plan

- The group reviewed the different programmes and offered their feedback.

Programme 1 – Marketing & PR

- The workshops 2024 are the first of ongoing events that are crucial to ensuring continued engagement with the industry on the Funds processes and initiatives.
- Attendees had the opportunity to sign up for newsletters during the workshops to keep informed about future events and the promotion of the programme will include ways to stay informed.
- DS raised a point regarding the use of the term "low season" in marketing, suggesting a focus on high season opportunities. He emphasised the importance of flexibility in seasonal campaigns to ensure the summer season is also effectively targeted, rather than solely concentrating on the low season.

Programme 2 – Destination Development

- AC emphasised the importance of collaborating with the PRow when relevant to ensure a cohesive approach.
- AC noted from earlier feedback, the need to establish a framework of acceptable practices that involves coordination with various departments, such as the RAMS team. PB suggested forming a sub-group to align different workstreams and funding sources. PB and AC will take the lead in facilitating this collaboration and defining the parameters for the group's focus.

Action – PB and AC to take lead in establishing a sub-group and defining its parameters to ensure effective coordination across various departments and alignment of different workstreams and funding sources

Programme 3 – Grants Scheme

- AC proposed expediting the grant scheme to support local businesses, noting strong interest from the last feedback session. After reviewing the oversubscribed SCC events grant, she has drafted a scope that aligns with ESC criteria to increase visitor numbers. She suggests discussing this proposal with the group to prioritise its rollout for events this year. If agreed in principle, AC will circulate the grant scope next week for review.
- RC emphasised that grants should only support events that would occur without SZC funding, requiring clear criteria and evidence.

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- The first tranche will focus on events, with additional grants themes designed to the end of 2025.
- PB underscored the necessity of sustainability, ensuring grants support not only events but also other projects. AC emphasised that grant criteria should reflect a commitment to long-term sustainability. She raised the importance of utilising supportive measures to enhance the sustainability of events. PB added that it is essential for grants to be utilised in conjunction with support resources aimed at improving business models going forward.
- MH raised a question regarding the scope of the grant scheme, specifically how small and large grants will be differentiated and what the criteria will entail. While the current description refers to locations impacted by SZC, there may be opportunities to fund initiatives in areas not directly affected that could enhance overall access and promote activities. AC clarified that they intentionally avoided specifying a geographic radius, as future grants may have unique needs and criteria, that look to do as MH detailed.
- AC emphasised the importance of having detailed metrics for event grants, which will assist applicants in providing substantial evidence of feedback and economic benefits. The metrics are integrated within the scope to facilitate data collection. AC suggests circulating the event scope for further review to gather additional insights.

Action – AC to circulate the event scope for the group’s review to gather additional insights

- MWF recommended adding a section in the promotion of the grant for referrals and existing business support plus additional grant information to highlight the existing support network (e.g., growth hub, local resilience grants) stating the importance of signposting these.

Programme 4 – Sector Development & Training

- AC mentioned that VENI support is expected to be match funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund budget.
- MWF suggested following up with Pete Waters at the LVEP to clarify his plans, as they are progressing, and ensure alignment.

Action – AC to follow up with Pete Waters’ Sector Development & Training plans to ensure alignment

- AC emphasised that this programme presents significant opportunities, with Suffolk colleges expressing interest in collaboration.
- It was noted that the initiative also encompasses post-training support, including mentorship, work placements, and additional opportunities. The program has a strong track record of successfully placing individuals into employment after training, providing valuable metrics.

Programme 5 - Coordination & Enabling

- RC emphasised the importance of promoting the free Suffolk Coast DMO membership to ensure that people are aware of this opportunity.

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Key Decision – Group approves 2025 Tourism Mitigation Fund Implementation Plan on principle of changes discussed in this meeting.

AOB

- AC inquired about the resource aspect of the tourism fund and sought support from the working group, wanting to clarify whether partners, such as the DMO and others, can recharge costs incurred while supporting programmes or projects at an acceptable rate through the resource pot. AC believes this aligns with the DoO but is looking for the group's feedback to ensure there is support for allowing partners to recover costs associated with their time spent on projects.
- PB noted that while attendance and preparation for meetings are justifiable expenses, costs extending beyond these activities could complicate matters, highlighting the need for clear guidelines.
- Attending and preparing for working groups, as well as membership recognition, are not reimbursable under the DoO. However, AC argued that partners who contribute time to advance projects and outside of working group activities should be able to recharge that time, as it represents additionality beyond the group's core functions. She believes partners should be allowed to recover costs related to project activities, emphasising the distinction between working group activities and project delivery supported by the resource pot.
- There is a consensus on the need for clear guidelines to ensure understanding of what is and is not claimable, with prior agreement.
- DS proposed creating a brief that outlines the expected activities for participants, specifying their involvement in terms of parameters and time commitments. This approach would protect both individuals and the group while ensuring transparency.
- AC agreed on the importance of defining key aspects upfront when starting projects, , to ensure transparency and consistency.
- MH inquired about the relevance of these discussions to the 'Supporting Resources' pot in the DoO.
- PB emphasised the importance of consistency across all working groups
- AC will draft a scope outlining the types of items expected to fall under 'Supporting Resources' in the DoO to clarify and establish a framework for future work. RC will consult with the legal team on the SZC side, and ESC will conduct a review from their end as well.

Action – AC to draft scope outlining the type of items expected to fall under "supporting resources" in the DoO to clarify and establish a framework for future work. RC to consult with SZC legal team, and AC to ensure ESC conduct a review.

- Stakeholder updates:

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- MJ reported that the first LVEP board meeting took place in early February, where the group was informed of the SZC Tourism Mitigation Fund and the Tourism Working Group. This served as an opportunity to promote the fund and remind participants of its existence.
- MJ stated that SCC is hosting a workshop with Oxfordshire County Council next week focused on collaborating and managing NSIPs, during which the tourism mitigation fund will also be discussed.
- AC noted that the DMO is making good progress with the conference. DS mentioned that an agenda has been prepared, which will be shared with the group. The goal of the conference is to engage participants and emphasise that the visitor economy is well-supported, focusing on promoting their ongoing efforts and discussing them positively.
- Next TWG scheduled online for 26th of June from 10:00-11:30.

Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
12/11/2024	1	RC to check if unsuccessful community fund projects can be shared	SZC	Next meeting
21/03/2025	2	PB and AC to take lead in establishing a sub-group and defining its parameters to ensure effective coordination across various departments and alignment of different workstreams and funding sources	Working Group	Next meeting
21/03/2025	3	AC to circulate the event scope for the group's review to gather additional insights	ESC	Next meeting
21/03/2025	4	AC to follow up with Pete Waters' Sector Development & Training plans to ensure alignment	Working Group	Next meeting
21/03/2025	5	AC to draft scope outlining the type of items expected to fall under "supporting resources" in the DoO to clarify and establish a	Working Group	Next meeting

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		framework for future work. RC to consult with SZC legal team, and AC to ensure ESC conduct a review.		
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Key Decisions made during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Decision	Description
21/03/2025	1	Tourism Mitigation Fund Implementation Plan	Group approves 2025 Tourism Mitigation Fund Implementation Plan on principle of changes discussed in this meeting.

Author: Caitlin Murphy (SZC)