



Report sponsor: Rachel North, Deputy Chief Executive (Communities and Place)  
Report author: Stella Birks, Visitor Services Development Manager

## **Developing the Derby City Tourism Offer**

### **Purpose**

- 1.1 To consider the city council's response to the De Bois national review of the UK's Destination Management arrangements and to explore how Derby's Tourism offer should develop to take advantage of these emerging opportunities including the delivery of the ambitions emerging in the Derby City Centre Ambition and the legacy from the UK City of Culture 2025 bid.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To approve officers working in partnership to progress plans in line with the recommendations made at 4.1, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism and to provide an update in a future report to Cabinet.

### **Reason(s)**

- 3.1 The wider context for Tourism in Derby is the national review of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) commissioned in 2021 by the DCMS Secretary of State and Tourism Minister. (The De Bois Review).

The purpose of this review is to rationalise the DMO landscape across the United Kingdom to improve national and international tourism and to reduce current duplication and inefficiency in our national tourism arrangements which have become fragmented and complex.

Critically however the recommendations from the report would include the development of a national tiered structure where only the first two tiers of DMOs are recognised by central government for support including inclusion in national campaigns and access to any potential national funding.

Given the city's ambitions to utilise its many assets to reinvent and regenerate Derby in line with the emerging City Centre Ambition and the recent UK City of Culture 2025 bid it is important that the city can meet the criteria of a Tier 1 or Tier 2 review and to avoid the risk of being downgraded to a tier 3, with no influence or opportunity within an East Midlands DMO Structure.

While the intentions of DCMS to follow the recommendations in the De Bois Review are not yet clear, it is important that DMOs begin to respond to the opportunities and challenges in preparation.

To be successful in attracting more visitors the city needs an appropriate tourism infrastructure in place to:

- Develop products that meet visitor demands
- Work with the industry to raise standards, identify gaps and meet expectations
- Engage with campaigns being developed by the national tourist board
- Create bookable experiences and promote these to potential visitors
- Look after the needs of visitors when they are in the destination.

3.2 At present the city council's tourism team operates as the DMO for Derby (VisitDerby) but in response to the national review this arrangement needs to develop to effectively respond to the opportunities and meet the challenges including:

- Being competitive with other destinations. Tourism is a hugely competitive industry and other destinations are investing and building their infrastructure
- Supporting businesses to post Covid recovery and culture led regeneration
- Responding to the opportunities created by upcoming developments including Moorways Sports Village, Becketwell Performance Venue, Derby Market Hall and The Derby City Centre Plan.

## **Supporting information**

4.1 To understand how the tourism offer needs to develop to meet the above needs, a report was commissioned from MYPRAXIS LLP, national specialists in the tourism field which involved extensive stakeholder engagement across the city. The report makes three key recommendations:

- A new strategic coalition is established across the Derbyshire geography to recognise the role of Derby City in the context of the natural assets of the Peak District.
- A separate city-based organisation is developed to work in partnership across stakeholders to deliver the effective management of culture and tourism in Derby, reinforcing the strength of the partnership 'Team Derby' culture.
- A baseline of data and intelligence is created to inform the development of the visitor and cultural offer.

- 4.2 **A new strategic coalition across the Derbyshire geography.** The report recognises the unique collection of cultural and tourism assets across the city and the surrounding rural communities, including the Peak District but also the current fragmented approach to packaging and promoting these assets.

A coalition across this geography could thus potentially benefit all partners by creating a stronger, more effective, and better resourced partnership, more likely to be recognised as a Tier 1 DMO (Or Tier 2 if the East Midlands is Tier 1).

As above, if DCMS follow the recommendations in the De Bois review, funding will follow the establishment of the DMO structure (for Tiers 1 and 2 only).

It will be easier to attract local membership/ advertising income as a strong effective partnership accessing support and funding from the national tourist board – VisitBritain.

- 4.3 **Develop a separate organisation working in partnership to manage and promote Derby City as a destination.** Just as a coalition across the wider geography creates a stronger and more relevant partnership at a regional and national level, a Derby City focussed collaboration would make the city a stronger and more relevant partner at the Derbyshire level.

This approach would enable strong links to be made into the legacy from the work done to date to bid into the UK City of Culture 2025 process and the developing Cultural Compact work funded by Arts Council England, bringing together cultural partners to develop citywide offers which are greater than the sum of its parts.

The exact form of this vehicle remains to be explored and officers working across the council and with key partners will be developing these options during the next phase, which would be subject to a further report to Cabinet.

- 4.4 **A baseline of data and intelligence.** If investment in tourism and cultural marketing is to be justified, there needs to be a solid evidence base on which to build business cases.

Work has already started within the council to explore options and identify the most relevant measurement tools that will meet the needs across several services. Partners will also be central to this work, to coordinate intelligence across the city.

Analysis options that allow for benchmarking against regional and national targets/ standards will be vital for future events and funding bids.

## **Public/stakeholder engagement**

- 5.1 Over 40 stakeholders were consulted in the creation of the Derby Destination Management Development Report including Derby culture, events and tourism organisations, Derby City Council Officers and members, Derbyshire County Council and Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire.
- 5.2 The Derby Destination Management Development Report has been considered by the members of the Destination Management Plan Steering Group, made of a range of local tourism businesses and stakeholders and within the Council.

## Other options

- 6.1 Do nothing option. We continue to deliver a tourism service in the current arrangements, which is becoming increasingly uncompetitive in the face of investment by other destinations. We are unable to meet the demands created by our ambitions for Derby. This could inhibit the chances for Derby to be successful in a bid to be a future UK City of Culture or create reputational damage from being unable to deliver City of Culture well, should Derby be successful in the future. Bidding for other events and funding opportunities may also be impacted on.
- 6.2 Do nothing to develop Derby Tourism and be downgraded as a Tier 3 DMO with no funding or engagement opportunities at a regional and national level.

## Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 If an alternative delivery model was chosen, this could potentially create further income generation and external funding opportunities.

The resource/ funding needs of the culture and events teams and the programme of events and activities will also need further consideration.

## Legal implications

- 8.1 Whilst there are no specific legal implication arising directly from this Report, if the Council ultimately resolves to proceed with establishing a separate delivery vehicle for DMO activities, specialist legal advice will be taken on structure and appropriate governance arrangements.

## Climate implications

- 9.1 No direct implications, though assisting businesses to consider climate implications would be a key area of activity for an effective DMO in Derby.

## Other significant implications

- 10.1 Insufficient resources for the team/s will impact on potential success when making future funding and event bids as well as working effectively with key partners. This could further result in Derby losing cultural partners, talent and experience to other cities.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	Emily Feenan, Director of Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services	31/03/2022
Finance	Simon Riley, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer	01/04/2022
Service Director(s)	Claire Davenport, Director of Leisure, Culture and Tourism	01/04/2022
Report sponsor	Rachel North, Strategic Director for Communities and Place	01/04/2022
Other(s)		

**Background papers:** The Derby  
Destination Management Plan  
Development Report  
**List of appendices:**