

Question to Councillor Clive Harriss, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to the visitor economy in Buckingham

Could the Cabinet Member please provide an update on what actions and resources the Council is taking/investing to support the local visitor economy in Buckingham, including the Tourist Information Centre, and as part of the Council's Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan?

Joint Response from Councillor Clive Harriss, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure and Councillor Rachael Matthews, Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration with responsibility for Town Centre Regeneration

Dear Robin,

Thank you for your email and sharing your thoughts following the Select Committee meeting earlier this month.

Over the course of the development of the Visitor Economy Strategy, we have been keen to make sure that as many partners and places as possible across Buckinghamshire are involved in the shaping of the strategy as we recognise that the sector is predicated on the strength of places up and down the county.

It has been great to see the work Buckingham Town Council is putting into promoting its visitor offer and working with local attractions to ensure that this is communicated to a wider audience.

As we mentioned during the meeting, the strategy and action plan are still under development and we are not yet in a position to allocate any resources anywhere until we have the strategy in place and an action plan, developed with partners, to support its delivery.

We are however very keen to progress with discussions around our county's involvement in VisitEngland's 'Local Visitor Economy Partnership' programme. We feel that gaining accreditation in this scheme will stand us in great stead for potential funding opportunities for our towns and villages in the future.

The strategy itself will acknowledge the importance of our market towns, including Buckingham, and we are very much looking forward to seeing how we can make the most of the excellent offer to continue to bring visitors to the county. As we have during the development stage, we are very keen to make sure that partners countywide are able to contribute to the delivery of the strategy and as such, we will be looking to engage with stakeholders including Buckingham Town Council to ensure that this can happen.