

Appendix 1

Email from Sussex Resilience Forum's (SRF) Executive Recovery Steering Group (ERSG)

Colleagues

I am keen to ensure that you are kept up to date with the work of this group. The following is largely taken from the Request for Tender which Brighton and Hove are about to issue on behalf of the group.

- In October 2020, the Sussex Resilience Forum's (SRF) Executive Recovery Steering Group (ERSG) agreed to establish a Sussex-wide recovery group for tourism, spearheaded by Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC), East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and West Sussex County Council (WSCC), recognising that the visitor economy needs to be prioritised given its economic importance to the region. Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive of Worthing and Adur Council has been asked by the SRF to Chair this group.
- Tourism is a key economic driver in Sussex, which has been profoundly impacted by COVID, with VisitBritain estimating that the tourism sector will lose £37bn from its impact with a £15bn drop in income from overseas visitors and £22bn lost from domestic tourism. The tourism sector and the visitor economy has been prioritised by all three local authorities in their recovery plans whilst the two Local Enterprise Partnerships, Coast 2 Capital (C2C) and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) recognise the importance of the sector in their plans and strategies.
- BHCC, ESCC and WSCC are looking to commission an external agency with appropriate knowledge and experience to produce an evidence base to inform a medium-term action plan and long-term vision for the Sussex visitor economy. This is the first time that the three local authorities have come together to commission shared research and support the Sussex visitor economy through a pan-Sussex approach.
- We are seeking to set out a shared, ambitious vision for Sussex's visitor economy, realising that this ambition will require a strong partnership between the public and private sector to deliver a strategy that will be dynamic in nature and flexible enough to capitalise on the opportunities and counter the potential issues of a post COVID environment, whilst capitalising on the Pan-Sussex offer.
- Tender documents will be issued on 11 January 2021, with contract commencing on 22 February 2021.
- ESCC has committed £25k in total across the 2020/21 and 2021/22 to support this procurement.

The Group is not planning to develop a new brand or at this stage initiate new marketing activity. Instead our focus is on bringing together the combined pan-Sussex offer in order to gain a more influential voice nationally with a view to this attracting additional resources in the future. It appears (although not seen this confirmed in writing but heard from several sources) that Visit England are planning

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a review of DMOs. This will probably come before the announcement of Tourism Zone opportunities. This work will ensure that the Group is ready to influence and respond to the outcome of that review and any opportunities that arise following it. There may be more information following the VE briefing.