

Area West Committee – 15th February 2012

8. Promoting Crewkerne and Ilminster (Executive Decision)

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Purpose of the Report

To inform members of partnership work taking place in both Crewkerne and Ilminster to promote the towns to visitors and to recommend financial support that will enable this project to progress.

Public Interest

Representatives from the Local Information Centres, Town Councils, tourism businesses, Chamber of Commerce and Crewkerne Museum are working with the Area West Community Regeneration Officer together to help promote Crewkerne and Ilminster to potential visitors in 2012 and beyond.

Recommendations

That members:

- (1) note the content of the report;
- (2) agree to the allocation of £10,480 towards the promotion of Crewkerne and Ilminster to visitors as detailed in the report.

Background

The desire to attract more visitors to the two market towns was originally identified in the community plans carried out by both the Ilminster Forum and A Better Crewkerne and District (ABCD). Since the publication of their community plans both these groups have successfully completed projects that have been beneficial to the visitor economy:

- Walking leaflets in both Crewkerne and Ilminster
- Visitor boards in Crewkerne and Ilminster
- Heritage trail booklet in Ilminster
- Shoppers boards in both Crewkerne and Ilminster
- Improved pedestrian link in Crewkerne town centre

In the summer of 2011 the Regeneration Officer, along with representatives from both Crewkerne ABCD and Ilminster Forum attended a Destination Marketing workshop delivered by Hidden Britain, an organisation that describes itself as one that

“Helps people share what they love about where they live to ensure long term economic and social benefits for the whole community”.

The workshop provided detailed information about different marketing techniques that local groups could use and included a number of case studies of market towns that have

successfully used a partnership approach to promote themselves. The central themes from the day were:

- People need to work together to promote their town
- They need to recognise and agree the main assets of their area
- The successful “offer” tells visitors who you are and why they should choose you
- A strategic approach is needed to plan successful promotional activities
- Identifying the target audience is essential
- The local marketing effort should only focus on one or two objectives at a time

The training was very informative and it was agreed that an adapted version of this workshop should be held in each of the two towns. In September 2011 a wide range of people associated with the tourism economy were invited to attend a workshop in Ilminster and similarly in Crewkerne. Identical workshops were delivered in each town with the same set of questions being asked to get the attendees thinking about why people would want to visit their town. People were also asked to come up with ideas to help promote their town to their target audience. After the workshop each town set up a smaller working group to formulate and progress some of the ideas that had been generated.

Ilminster

The Ilminster working group is made up of representatives from the Ilminster Forum, the Chamber of Commerce, accommodation providers, the Town Council and the Area West Community Regeneration Officer. This group took the results gained from their workshop and agreed that the key assets for Ilminster were:

- Good quality independent shops and accommodation.
- Great location being very close to good road network, easy to get to and a great base for exploring the south west.
- Beautiful countryside with lovely landscapes surrounding the town.

Ilminster identified their target audience as people interested in having a relaxing break. Generally this target audience like to meander around market towns stopping for coffee, lunch and some leisurely shopping, they also enjoy relaxing activities like walking and cycling. In addition they will spend time and money eating out and visiting food and drink producers and suppliers, gardens and National Trust properties. The group also acknowledged that Ilminster is well placed for business travellers and that the key assets of location and quality would also appeal to the business market.

To promote the identified assets to their target audience the Ilminster group have chosen to come up with a marketing brand for the town and surrounding area that can be used by all relevant businesses and organisations. The brand will feature a logo with strap line both of which reflect the key assets and appeal to the target audience.

The main focus of the brand will be a new website aimed primarily at tourists, the design of which will appeal to the target audience. In addition they want to produce a brochure that will be distributed to Cartgate Tourist Information Centre and others on the A303. The brochure will appeal to people who do not use the Internet but it will also direct those who do to the website for further information.

Both the groups in Crewkerne and Ilminster would like to produce A4 sized map pads that incorporate a street map of the town on one side highlighting where essential buildings and points of interest are. On the other side there will be a wider map of the

area which will incorporate the coastline, again this will highlight attractions and other useful places. These map pads will be distributed to relevant establishments in and around each town such as the LIC, Community Office, Hotels and other accommodation providers.

The LIC and tourist businesses in the town have commented on the need for postcards of Ilminster as these currently do not exist. The group would like to take some of the photos that will be commissioned and have them made into postcards to put on sale in local businesses and at the Local Information Centre.

Costs are:

Item	Amount
Photographs for use on publicity materials	£2,000.00
20 page A5 Brochure	£1,370.00
Brochure distribution	£500.00
Design & printing of 100 A4 map pads	£815.00
Postcards 1000	£55.00
Website	£1,000.00
Website optimisation	£150.00
Website hosting & domain name for 2 years	£270.00
TOTAL	£6,160.00

Funding for this will be made up in the following way:

Funding source	Cash amount	Status
Ilminster Forum	£1,000	Confirmed
Ilminster Town Council	£500	Confirmed
Ilminster Chamber of trade	£250 - £500	To be decided
Sub Total	£1750 - £2000	
SSDC	£4160	
TOTAL	£6160	

Ilminster Forum are responsible for managing the project budget on behalf of the working group.

In-kind contributions

In addition to the costs a substantial amount of in-kind contribution will be made to this project. The working group includes people with the skills and experience in marketing and design and they have produced the strap line and logo free of charge, in addition volunteers will be producing the text and design work for the website and brochure. The upkeep and maintenance of the website will be carried out free of charge by volunteers in the Ilminster Forum who have the IT skills to easily do this.

Crewkerne

The group in Crewkerne is made up of representatives from the Local Information Centre (LIC) Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, Heritage Centre, local accommodation providers and the Area West Community Regeneration Officer. Crewkerne Local Information Centre is responsible for managing the project budget on behalf of the partnership.

The Crewkerne partnership identified Crewkerne's main assets as being

- Interesting history and heritage
- Friendly town
- A great location, which is easy to get to and surrounded by lovely countryside.

Like Ilminster, the Crewkerne group has also identified their target audience as people who are interested in exploring the surrounding countryside, visiting National Trust properties, walking, pottering around market towns and going to the coast. They also recognise that Crewkerne makes a good base for people wishing to explore Devon, Dorset and Somerset.

As Crewkerne Local Information Centre already has a website aimed at visitors to the area, the Crewkerne group are primarily asking for financial assistance with printed materials to help promote their town.

The Crewkerne group have opted for a large foldout to A3 leaflet incorporating a street map, information and photos about the town and surrounding area. In addition they require map pads and postcards and some money to promote the existing website and improve its ranking on Google.

Costs

Item	Cost
Printing of 1000 A3 leaflets	£1,000
Photographs for use on leaflet and website	£2,000
Distribution of leaflets	£300
Website optimisation	£150
Design & Printing of 100 A4 map pads	£815
Postcards	£55
Total	£4,320

Funding

Funding source	Cash amount	Status
A Better Crewkerne & District	£250	Confirmed
Crewkerne Town Council	£200 (for leaflet)	Confirmed
Crewkerne Town Council	£300 (for map)	To be decided
Crewkerne LIC	£250	Confirmed
Sub total	£1,000	
SSDC	£3,320	
Total	£4,320	

Like the Ilminster group the Crewkerne group are also contributing a significant amount of in-kind work towards this project. The leaflet will be designed by volunteers and the website will be maintained by the LIC, which is run by volunteers.

Advertising

Both Crewkerne and Ilminster are well placed to benefit from an influx of visitors over the forthcoming holiday season. Firstly they are close enough to Weymouth to cater for people wanting to visit the Olympic sailing events. In addition the 'stay-cation' is

becoming increasingly common and the south west is the most popular place in England for people to holiday. Both Crewkerne and Ilminster are centrally located for people wanting to explore Devon, Dorset and Somerset, plus they also make good stopping off points for people travelling further west. To ensure that people outside the area are made aware of the benefits of the area it is important to use strategically placed advertising to signpost them to the websites of Crewkerne and Ilminster. It is proposed that £3,000 is allocated towards advertising the market towns in appropriate national publications. The Area West Community Regeneration Officer will manage the budget directly for this element of the project.

Financial Implications

The recommended allocation of £10,480 towards this project can be met from existing budgets.

Implications for Corporate Priorities

1.11 A vibrant and sustainable Yeovil, Market Towns and rural economy

Carbon Emissions & Adapting to Climate Change Implications (NI188)

Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Every effort will be made to ensure the promotion of visitor offer(s) arising from this project is as wide as possible and in accessible formats.

Background Papers: *None.*