

SUBJECT:	RDP FUNDED TEMPORARY PART-TIME COACH TOURISM VISITOR INFORMATION POINT OFFICER POST
MEETING:	23 AUGUST 2017
CABINET MEMBER:	CLLR GREENLAND
DATE:	31 JULY 2017

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1.1 To seek Cabinet Member approval for the recruitment of a temporary part-time Coach Tourism Visitor Information Point Officer which is fully funded under the approved Vale of Usk (VoU) Rural Development Programme (RDP) LEADER Visitor Information project.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To approve the recruitment of a temporary part-time Coach Tourism Visitor Information Point Officer which is fully funded under the approved Vale of Usk RDP LEADER Visitor Information project.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Monmouthshire County Council Tourism has been successful in its application for £49,153.84 RDP LEADER funding for a Visitor Information and Coach Tourism Project, which includes the above fully funded temporary part-time post. The purpose of this post is to deliver improvements in local visitor information provision and to work with local businesses to capitalise on the opportunities of coach tourism.
- 3.2 The approved project aims to develop a more sustainable visitor information service in the context of reducing local authority budgets in a way which maximises and distributes the benefits of the service more widely across the area. Approved activities include:
- A review of current visitor information provision & support across the Vale of Usk RDP area
 - The identification and development of appropriate local solutions (in partnership with relevant stakeholders) to sustain / improve visitor information provision across the area
 - Development and delivery of ambassador training to support the new arrangements
 - Establishment and support of a VoU RDP visitor information group for members to share good practice and network
 - Development and delivery of a new Vale of Usk visitor information point (VIP) scheme
 - Development and implementation of a Vale of Usk Group Travel initiative to help local businesses capitalise on the opportunities of coach tourism.
 - Development & delivery of pilot product knowledge / tour guide training based on Roman Caerwent
 - Development and promotion of new coach tourism itineraries
 - Development of a new coach tourism toolkit for businesses / ambassadors

3.3 The encouragement of coaches and groups is an important element of building a buoyant visitor economy and transforming visitor attractions into successful businesses. There are however common challenges facing coach operators, destinations and attractions particularly as this large potential market is often ignored or discouraged through a lack of understanding of its requirements. This project and post provides a clear commitment to welcoming coaches to the Vale of Usk project area, with Abergavenny & Chepstow TICs operating as coach tourism hubs.

3.4 The project is one element of a three pronged approach to developing a more sustainable future for the Tourist Information Centre service, which Monmouthshire communities and businesses value so highly. In Monmouthshire's 2016 Tourism Business Survey, 89% of respondents agreed with the statement that *'Tourist Information Centres are an important part of the destination offer and should be prioritised for support'*.

4. REASONS:

4.1 The post is required to deliver specified activity within the approved Vale of Usk RDP LEADER Visitor Information Project. This links with identified priorities within Monmouthshire's revised Destination Management Plan 2017-2020.

4.2 The post will deliver added value to the TIC service by increasing the number of coach visitors to the Vale of Usk and improve their experience of the destination to encourage repeat visits and recommendations. According to research carried out on behalf of Welsh Government in 2012, each TIC enquiry (face to face, email and phone) is estimated to deliver a net additional value of £12.79 to the local economy.

4.3 The post will increase footfall and spend at Abergavenny and Chepstow TICs to achieve income targets to help offset operating costs.

4.4 The post will improve destination performance by increasing the benefits of coach tourism and distribute these more widely across the Vale of Usk area.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 It is proposed that the project and post is managed by the Food & Tourism Strategic Manager, as this was the basis of the match funding and project approval.

5.2 The role description and person specification for the temporary part-time post is included as supporting evidence. The salary / SCP for the 12 hour per week post has been costed in the application and subsequently job evaluated as Grade D SCP 17-21 (pro rata) for 2 years at a total cost of £17,873.84.

5.3 The temporary part-time post will be based at Chepstow TIC with the 12 hours a week split equally between Abergavenny and Chepstow TICs.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

7. CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Cabinet

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Vale of Usk RDP LEADER Visitor Information Project Application
Vale of Usk RDP project approval offer letter
Coach Tourism Visitor Information Point Job Role and Person Specification

9. AUTHOR:

Nicola Edwards
Food & Tourism Strategic Manager

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644847

E-mail: nicolaedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk