



## Policy and Resources Committee– 29 September 2011

### Best of British Programme 2012

#### Purpose of report

To seek Council endorsement for a high profile programme of existing and new events across East Northamptonshire to raise awareness of the attractions of the area and form the final stage of the “Escape, explore, enjoy” theme from the 2010 Tourism Strategy.

#### Attachment(s)

None

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 The idea for the Best of British programme arose from discussions held with representatives of the town councils of the six market towns on ways to promote awareness of, and interest in the market towns to increase footfall and business activity in each town. Later stages of these discussions will focus on the potential for increased specialist market activity but in the short term the Best of British programme proposal has been agreed as a way of building on current activity and capitalising on the major 2012 events to raise regional awareness of the towns and surrounding areas.

#### 2.0 Proposed Programme Arrangements

2.1 It is proposed that the programme will run from 21 April ( just before St George's Day 23 April) to the end of the Olympics (12 August 2012), to include the Diamond Jubilee weekend 2-5 June 2012. The Programme will aim to promote

- *Local market towns and businesses*, especially those businesses that have had Leader Plus or council-related funding, and
- *Local culture and heritage*

2.2 In order to give focus and impact to the programme, only events and activities held within the East Northamptonshire Council boundary will be included in the programme. Some events will be regular features of the local calendar e.g. Oundle International Festival and Thrapston Charter Fair, while other activities will be one-off events linked to international events such as the Olympics or the Diamond Jubilee. An indicative programme is currently being developed, which will start with a high profile new opening event.

2.3 As St George's Day falls on a Monday, it is proposed that the opening event is held on Saturday 21 April 2012 in the countryside, as close to the middle of the district as possible. The proposed format is a Royal themed mini-county show, with a local food producers' marquee, a local crafts marquee and procession of historic tableau on trailers representing key local historic moments and local carnival 'royalty'. Discussions are being held with possible location managers/owners.

2.4 To preserve quality and ensure that the Best of British brand has maximum impact, all events included in the programme will be agreed by the organising committee. This will comprise a nominee from each of the Town Councils and other key organisations together with project management provided by ENC. Each town had been asked to nominate a responsible officer to coordinate activities in their area, work with their Town Council colleagues to organise their own events that link to the theme, and liaise with the villages around them.

- 2.5 Although only limited discussions have been held so far, organisations which have expressed interest to date include:
- Local Town Councils
  - Raunds Youth Action Group (floats, carnival queen and princesses for opening event)
  - Raunds Chamber of Trade and Christmas Lights Committee
  - Lyveden New Bield (National Trust)
  - Irthlingborough Historical Society
  - Thrapston Amateur Dramatic Society
  - Thrapston Hope Group (Party in the Peace Park)
  - Women's Institute
- 2.6 The Programme would link well with the Destination Nene Valley aspirations in the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership business plan. The planned inclusion of a Walking Festival in ENC, promoting the new Walk Leaflets produced by NCC and ENC, will link the programme to the Green and Blue Ways theme of the ENC 2010 Tourism Strategy.
- 2.7 For maximum impact, promotion of the Best Of British programme will focus on regional advertising, although information will be provided to those bodies charged with national and international promotion of England in 2012. An outline programme needs to be ready for December 2011 with detailed programme ready for the launch in January 2012.

### **3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 3.1 There are no known equalities issues arising from this report.

### **4.0 Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **5.0 Risk Management**

- 5.1 There are no significant risks arising from this report. Any risks created by individual events will be assessed and managed as part of the preparations for the event.

### **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 No additional funding is sought from East Northamptonshire Council. Some of the existing Tourism budget for 2011/12 will be used to support the initial promotion of the event and support will be required from the Tourism and Economic Development Officer during both 2011/12 & 2012/13. It is proposed to seek external funding and sponsorship to further support, for both overall promotion and individual events. The majority of fundraising and organisational activity will take place at the town council or organising body level.

### **7.0 Corporate Outcomes**

- 7.1 The Best of British programme would help deliver the following outcomes from the Corporate Plan
- Regeneration and Economic Development
  - Develop opportunities for sport and recreation on the River Nene

### **8.0 Recommendation**

- 8.1 The Committee is asked to endorse the concept of the Best of British programme and authorise the submission of appropriate grant and sponsorship bids, providing these

do not require any additional funding from this council.

*(Reason: To enable planning for the Programme to proceed in time to meet external marketing deadlines and attract additional funding.)*

<b>Legal</b>	Power: Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000;				
	Other considerations: 2009 East Northamptonshire Tourism Strategy				
<b>Background Papers:</b> None					
<b>Person Originating Report:</b> Sharn Matthews, Executive Director <a href="mailto:smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gob.uk">smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gob.uk</a>					
<b>Date:</b> 19 September 2011					
<b>CFO</b>		<b>MO</b>		<b>CX</b>	

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