

## **Invitation to Tender for the Development of a Tourism Growth Strategy for Lancashire**

Marketing Lancashire is seeking to appoint a suitably qualified, experienced and independent single company or consortia to support the development of a new Tourism Growth Strategy for Lancashire. The approach required is a collaborative one that should build on progress made against the 2016-2020 Lancashire Visitor Economy Strategy and engage public, private and third sector stakeholders in setting out a clearly articulated, refreshed vision for driving sustainable, innovative, resilient and inclusive sector growth.

### **Introduction**

Host to over 67 million visitors each year, Lancashire has a compelling story to tell – from the UK's favourite seaside resort, 137 miles of natural coastline, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Queen's castle in the North to an array of historic houses, museums, family attractions and a year-round calendar of festivals and events. Alongside award winning food producers, gastropubs and restaurants, glamping sites, boutique hotels and spas they provide a diverse and distinctive cultural narrative that helps to share Lancashire's story through the rich quality of life and leisure experiences they deliver for both visitors and those who live, work and study here.

The visitor economy is integral to the county's economic success and prosperity; identified by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership as one of 7 leading business sectors for the county, tourism accounts for around 7% of Lancashire's economy (worth £29bn in GVA) and 11% of jobs. Sector growth trends from 2014 are strong (+15%) with the sector valued at £4.35 billion in 2017, the third largest region, by value, across the northwest (Source STEAM 2017).<sup>1</sup>

However, set against an ever-changing external landscape, competition from destinations both within the UK and overseas is fiercer than ever with consumer trends and behaviour driven by a range of influences from continued globalisation and innovations in technology to political uncertainties, not least those surrounding BREXIT. The continued growth and prosperity of Lancashire's visitor economy will thus be dependent upon how, as a destination, it responds to the demands, attitudes and behaviour of key visitor markets both now and in the future.

We need to better understand those trends and external influences that will present opportunities and challenges for Lancashire so that the sector can respond proactively in a

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<sup>1</sup> Lancashire's visitor economy is valued at £4.35 bn, the third largest in the northwest, set against Manchester £8.1bn, Liverpool City region £4.53 bn, Cheshire and Warrington at £3.37 bn and Cumbria £2.9 bn (Source STEAM 2017)

way that will enhance its competitiveness and maximise its capacity for growth. This will mean working our assets harder, as well as investing in new ones, to maintain growth trends and strengthen our positioning as a compelling visitor destination, drawing out our distinctive qualities and being bolder in the way we tell our story.

## **Background / context**

Marketing Lancashire is the designated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for the county, working in partnership across public, private and third sectors as well as representing approximately 500 visitor economy businesses through our commercial partnership base. The organisation also delivers marketing and communications support for the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and is wholly committed to raising the profile of the county as a leading national and international destination to visit, live, work, study and invest.

The 2016 – 2020 Visitor Economy Strategy and Destination Management Plan set out to provide a strategic steer for the development and growth of Lancashire’s visitor economy, including how the sector would maximise tourism’s contribution to the wider economy, employment opportunities and quality of life through a series of priority action areas.

The scope of this tender includes undertaking a succinct review of progress against this plan in determining Lancashire’s current positioning and forming a baseline against which the new strategy will be developed.

There are also a number of strategic initiatives underway to which this piece of work should refer, including the development of a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) for the county. The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership is currently developing the evidence base in respect of the current strengths and weaknesses of Lancashire’s economy; alongside further consultation this will be used to determine the key strategic priorities for Lancashire as a whole, with the final LIS expected to be published at the end of this year. There is a clear opportunity to support the LIS by identifying ways in which the sector can help drive productivity, new jobs and economic growth.

In addition, Lancashire has decided to bid for UK City of Culture in 2025 at a county wide level. The bid will involve multiple agencies from the county including the three universities, the cultural sector, broadcasters and the media, community groups and businesses. It is early days in the journey of Lancashire’s bid but the county has been testing support and feasibility for 6 months and there is a high level of backing from the cultural sector and agencies across the county. The anticipated timetable for UK City of Culture is to submit outline bids by early 2020 with final bids towards the end of 2020 / early 2021. The bidding process offers a way of strengthening collaboration between traditional cultural and tourism organisations as part of a longer term culture strategy.

At a national level, the recently announced Tourism Sector Deal focuses on boosting productivity, developing skills and enhancing the visitor offer aligned to the 5 pillars of the wider Industrial Strategy – Ideas, People, Place, Infrastructure and Business Environment. It pledges to introduce a new Tourism Data Hub; establish a national Hospitality and Tourism Skills Board; drive investment in new accommodation stock, attractions and product; develop an International Business Events Plan and launch an open competition to pilot up to 5 Tourism Action Zones across the country. As part of their remit, these will explore innovative ways of

extending the season, tackling local barriers to sustainable tourism growth and support a drive to make destinations more accessible, seeking to increase the number of international disabled visitors. Delivery will be led by the British Tourist Authority who has agreed to continue to project manage the deal and a conference will be held to kick start an industry engagement programme in September.

It is anticipated that the new Tourism Growth Strategy for Lancashire will help demonstrate the county's response to the opportunities and challenges presented by the Tourism Sector Deal and build a compelling business case that could support future aspirations to bid for Tourism Zone status.

### **Scope & parameters:**

The aim and overall output of this tender is to develop a new Tourism Growth Strategy for Lancashire.

The strategy should cover a 10 year (2020 – 2030) vision and framework for delivery and your proposed approach should clearly address the following tender objectives:

- Evaluate progress against the Lancashire Visitor Economy Strategy 2016-2020, setting out the sector's current positioning and considering emerging trends, opportunities and challenges of relevance. This should include a review of the evidence base including sector performance; recent growth trends and future forecasting; new and planned investments of significant scale; current brand architecture for Lancashire – its promotional assets and activity alongside qualitative measures such as destination image and perceptions. Comparator analysis of similar destinations and / or DMO areas may also be considered for benchmarking purposes.
- Set out a range of methodologies for consultation, including facilitation of a range of engagement events that will help secure support of businesses and leading stakeholders.
- Provide a long term strategic vision that clearly articulates Lancashire's growth ambitions for its visitor economy.
- Define the priority action areas, including target markets, for Lancashire's visitor economy alongside the capacity, capability and willingness of the sector to respond.
- As part of the sector's response, identify a range of strategic interventions through which the sector can overcome any barriers and maximise its capacity for growth whilst enabling it to make the most of its distinctive strengths.
- Recommend mechanisms and delivery structures for co-ordinating the tourism growth strategy at the county level ensuring greater collaboration across political and administrative boundaries.
- Embed a performance monitoring and evaluation framework from an early stage.

The approach set out should also maintain a degree of flexibility to respond to the emerging LIS and other relevant strategic matters arising.

It may be noted that some work has already commenced in collating data to facilitate a review of the sector's current positioning and this will be shared with the appointed consultants.

Whilst the key deliverable of this tender is a new Tourism Growth Strategy for Lancashire, interim reporting will be required as follows:

- Presentation of a current positioning statement for Lancashire’s visitor economy and overview of key findings from the updated evidence base, sector analysis and research into emerging trends, opportunities and challenges
- Presentation of consultation and engagement findings
- Presentation of initial thoughts and ideas for shaping the strategy, including approaches to monitoring and evaluation
- Initial draft strategy
- Final strategy

A variety of formats may be used to present this information and will be agreed with the appointed company / consortia.

### **Timescales and Key Milestones**

| <b>Anticipated Timescales</b>                                | <b>Milestone</b>   |
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| Week commencing 5 <sup>th</sup> August 2019                  | Invitation to tender   |
| 12.00 Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2019                    | Deadline for tender submissions  |
| Week commencing 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2019               | Shortlisting and invitation to interview   |
| Week commencing 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2019               | Interviews   |
| Week commencing 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2019              | Inception meeting  |
| Week commencing 14 <sup>th</sup> October 2019                | Presentation of updated evidence base and sector analysis, findings and initial thinking |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> October – 8 <sup>th</sup> November 2019     | Stakeholder Engagement Events  |
| Week commencing 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2019               | Presentation of Initial draft  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2019 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2020 | Draft consultation   |
| Week commencing 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2020                | Presentation of final draft  |

### **Budget**

The maximum total budget identified for this commission is £30,000 net and is fully inclusive of any charges and expenses incurred in the delivery of this tender.

## Tender Format and Deadline

Written submissions should be sent electronically by the tender deadline of 12.00 Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 for the attention of Rachel McQueen, Chief Executive, Marketing Lancashire via [rachel@marketinglancashire.com](mailto:rachel@marketinglancashire.com)

Any questions arising in respect of this tender should also be made in writing via [rachel@marketinglancashire.com](mailto:rachel@marketinglancashire.com)

Tenders responses should include:

- Organisational identity – name, address, contact details by phone and email; company registration number and VAT registration number, if applicable.
- Website address.
- Name of lead contact (with contact details if different to those above).
- Whilst consortium bids will be considered, if applying as a consortia, you should clearly state the identities of all members.
- An overview of your approach in the form of a Project Plan which clearly demonstrates an understanding of the brief (including timescales), complexity of the sector's makeup and range of stakeholders at the Lancashire level.
- Examples of similar commissions delivered including outputs produced.
- Examples of a stakeholder engagement plan and methodologies used in areas with complex relationships and / or political and administrative boundaries.
- List of key personnel alongside their relevant experience and anticipated input.
- References for 2 organisations for whom you have delivered similar work within the last 3 years.
- Budget – costs should be exclusive of VAT with a breakdown of estimated charges and expenses.
- Capacity for regular review meetings – these may be in person or via teleconferencing. Frequency and format will be agreed with the appointed company / consortia.

## Tender Appraisal

This will be assessed as follows:

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|--|------------|
| <b>Cost</b>  | <b>20%</b> |
| <b>Ability to meet tender requirements and quality of response. This will be broken down by:</b> | <b>80%</b> |
| <i>Capacity to meet timescales</i>   | 5%         |
| <i>Experience of delivering similar projects successfully</i>                                    | 15%        |
| <i>Meets tender specification and demonstrates an aptitude for innovative approaches</i>         | 40%        |
| <i>Resources including an appropriate level of experienced personnel</i>                         | 10%        |
| <i>Experience of successful engagement and consultation plans</i>                                | 10%        |