

REPORT TITLE:

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Date:	14/11/2025
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr Pattison
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No N/A - scrutiny
Purpose of Report To provide an update to Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) on the developing Kirklees Tourism Strategy.	
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For OSMC to support the principles and objectives of the strategy as it progresses to Cabinet approval. • For OSMC to provide feedback on changes following the public consultation process. • For OSMC to note the contents of the report. Reasons for Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSMC considers a wide range of documents and strategies and is able to provide judicious advice and guidance for the strategy as it progresses to Cabinet approval; additionally, awareness and relevance of the work for other agendas across the OSMC work programme to support the strategy. 	
Resource Implications: None. The development of the strategy is a resourced work programme.	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	Give name and date for Cabinet / Scrutiny reports Rachel Spencer-Henshall – 24/10/2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Give name and date for Cabinet reports N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Give name and date for Cabinet reports N/A

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the progress to develop a Tourism Strategy that develops the current offer in the district and links activity with the emerging Kirklees Cultural and Heritage strategies and plans. These all play a role in delivering the Council Plan and Partnership Strategies.

The connecting point for the Heritage, Cultural and Tourism strategies is that they will all be centrally linked through telling the story of Kirklees. As the Heritage Strategy states, “Our heritage is our story; cultural activities enable us to explore those stories and tell them creatively; and tourism enables us to promote these stories and attract people to learn more about them.”

This strategy will give direction to an important area of work for the district that promotes the district to residents, visitors and businesses. Further to economic impact and improved perception of place, the work will connect to improved infrastructure and support for regeneration schemes, plus it will form part of region-wide activity to deliver a Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) Destination Management Plan with the other West Yorkshire authorities and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

2. Information required to take a decision

As identified earlier in this report, this builds on previous work and testing of themes with OSCM. A draft strategy was brought to OSMC for feedback on 28th February 2025 ([Scrutiny - 28th Feb 2025 - Tourism Strategy.pdf](#)), prior to public consultation.

The previous reports ‘Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategies’ ([Culture-Tourism-Heritage Strategies.pdf](#) and [Culture Heritage and Tourism Strategies Scrutiny 25.11.2022 .pdf](#)) identified Kirklees had been without a Tourism Strategy for many years. It was also recognised there is a need to support tourism areas such as hospitality, accommodation and visitor attractions to improve the visitor experience in Kirklees and effectively support our Visitor Economy.

This strategy, with the Heritage and Cultural strategies, will bring new confidence to our offer and how we describe it. Strengths for the district have been identified as our landscape; food and drink offer; music festivals and culture; heritage; screen tourism; and sport. The Strategy will seek to strengthen Kirklees’ participation in the regional tourism offer working with the West Yorkshire LVEP.

The Tourism Strategy links with the Visitor Economy and the economic activity generated by visitors including spending on services and goods such as accommodation, food and attractions. It also links to other economic impacts including job creation, infrastructure development and overall economic growth.

The content of the latest draft strategy in the appendices shows the priorities and activity for the coming three years following public consultation and feedback.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

This work is an agreed deliverable in the Council Plan 2024:

Section 4 of the Council Plan - Continue to invest and regenerate our towns and villages to support our diverse places and communities to flourish.

Engage more residents and visitors in our cultural and heritage offer and raise the profile of Kirklees by:

Publishing new strategies for Culture, Heritage and Tourism

3.2 Financial Implications

The development of the strategy is being delivered in service by Culture & Tourism. The West Yorkshire LVEP brings investment and expertise to the region to support joint initiatives for the development of strategic work in this area.

The delivery of the strategy will be scalable and respond to availability of resources and would look to galvanise relevant teams and projects across the council to deliver the objectives of the strategy and regional ambitions with West Yorkshire colleagues.

3.3 Legal Implications

There are no perceived legal implications in the development of the strategy, however the council's Legal Service will be consulted as required to avoid any legal implications.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

The strategy includes a specific aim to 'Develop Kirklees reputation for sustainability and encourage best practices in environmental process.' This would be developed with relevant council officers and with the Kirklees Council Environment Strategy to develop relevant plans with partners. The West Yorkshire LVEP also has a commitment to sustainability through the delivery of its plans.

3.5 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

There are no obligations in the development of the strategy and establishing the programme of work. Integrated Impact Assessments will be used to support the development process, with further assessments created as required for streams of work and projects resulting from the strategy.

4. Consultation

Further to the information in the 'background papers' section, work was undertaken in 2022 by The FabI, a mix of research and public consultation, which resulted in strategy and delivery options on which the current draft strategy is based.

Public consultation took place in summer 2025 with support from the council's Data & Insight team. The online survey comprised of multiple choice and free text questions. The survey was promoted through Council communications and 2 in person drop-in sessions were hosted to provide support to complete the survey.

The consultation received 258 responses, 93% identified as Kirklees residents. Of the six areas of strength identified below for Kirklees, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with them and the proposed plans to develop them.

- Music festivals and culture
- Heritage
- Food and drink
- Landscape and wellbeing
- Screen tourism
- Sport

The consultation highlighted some key areas of focus for respondents, some that the strategy can support directly, others that can be supported by contributing to a wider conversation around development in the district. The topics of feedback included:

- Improving communications and promotion
- Increasing inclusion and accessibility
- Strengthening travel infrastructure
- Promoting Kirklees businesses
- Developing and maintaining green spaces and active tourism
- Engaging with communities and regional partners
- Modernising cultural and screen tourism
- Improving venues and facilities
- Developing accommodation and offering a choice
- Regenerating and managing better town centres

The strategy has been amended to reflect this feedback where it was not already included. Where the strategy is not in a position to determine the direction of an area of work, e.g. regeneration and town centre management, feedback will be provided to teams leading those areas and a tourism and visitor economy voice established to support future activity.

A summary of the Lickert scale (a rating scale used to measure survey participants' opinions, often ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) results in response to the draft strategy with topics of feedback is included in the appendices.

5. Engagement

Engagement and research over several years is contained within the 'background papers' section and as outlined in section 4 through the work undertaken by The Fabl.

Broader engagement will continue through partnership working with tourism bodies, the West Yorkshire LVEP and the sector, guided by the emerging strategy.

6. Options

6.1 Options considered

It has been acknowledged in OSMC previously that Kirklees has a need for Culture, Heritage and Tourism strategies, not least due to their role in economic and social regeneration. The Tourism Strategy is being pursued following approval to promote and support Kirklees as a vibrant place and to strengthen our cultural and visitor offer, particularly important as we

develop the West Yorkshire offer with neighbouring authorities who have invested in their cultural and visitor facilities.

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

Officers recommend that the Committee notes the content of this report and the work undertaken following previous approval to pursue the strategy. The Committee's views on the content of the strategy following consultation are welcomed.

A level of responsibility exists through the Council commitment to working with our West Yorkshire colleagues at a local authority and combined authority level to deliver the West Yorkshire LVEP as agreed through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Board, 16th March 2023.

7. Next steps and timelines

Following feedback from OSCM, the strategy will move through an approval pathway to Cabinet approval.

This approval process is anticipated to complete by January 2026.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, 11/02/2021 14:00](#)

Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategies p9-26

10. Appendices

1. Summary of results in response to the draft strategy
2. Kirklees Tourism Strategy 2026 - 2029

11. Service Director responsible

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