



Leader of the Council

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Cllr Mimi Harker OBE
Chairman
Communities and Localism

Cllr David Carroll
Chairman
Growth, Infrastructure and Housing

22 September 2022

Dear Mimi and David

Joint Select Committee - Communities & Localism and Growth, Infrastructure & Housing 13 July 2022

Thank you very much for the supportive letter of 20 July regarding the Select Committee discussion on the Visitor Economy and I am really sorry for the delay in this response. I would agree that it was a very engaging conversation, and it was great to hear the thoughts of the Committees as well as our key partners from Buckinghamshire Business First, Visit Buckinghamshire and Buckinghamshire Culture on how we can all consider the best way to take things forward.

It was clear from discussion that there is real support and enthusiasm to develop a Visitor Economy Strategy and Action Plan that can identify key opportunities as well as how each Visitor Economy partner can help to deliver it. As reported to the Committee, the Council will take this forward in the coming months in conjunction with all the key partners for this sector; having an up-to-date strategy will support the better co-ordination of activities in promoting Buckinghamshire's tourism and place promotional activities.

Lisa Michelson and her team in Economic Growth and Regeneration will commence this work on the Visitor Economy Strategy immediately and she is already in the process of identifying experts in this sector who can support this work. We expect that a draft strategy will be completed by the end of this year with discussions at Cabinet and with key partners happening in the new year.

Having an evidence-based strategy will be key to understanding the likely benefits/impact that new initiatives and interventions could bring and will support discussions on potential financial decisions. As we talked about in the Committee, we will have significant pressures on Council funding so will need a robust rationale to increase spending in this area. The clarity that comes

from a new strategy can also identify new ways we can maximise impacts from our existing resources and bring in external funding where needed.

Thanks again for the Committees' consideration of this important issue and I look forward to updating you in due course regarding the next steps of the strategy and consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin Tett". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single, long, horizontal stroke.

Martin Tett
Leader
Buckinghamshire Council