

Plan for Change Destination Management Consultation Report



Introduction

The Plan for Change is committed to ensuring an open and transparent process, actively seeking the views of the local community, listening to ideas and where possible acting on these ideas.

Since the launch of the Plan for Change we have listened and engaged with local residents to find out what is important to them.

The Council Choices consultation, indicates that the most important priority was **supporting vulnerable people**, with **a strong local economy** and **a decent place to live** selected as choice two and three respectively.

The results of the Choices Consultation, to which the council received over 3000 responses, helped inform the 3-year Programme of Savings, which sets out how the council intends to achieve £26.5m savings by 2015.

The Programme of Savings was subject to public consultation between November 2011 and mid-January 2012. Comments from local residents and other stakeholders helped finalise and inform the budget setting process in February 2012.

Following a review under the strong local economy proposals outlined in the Programme of Savings a report was presented to Cabinet in October 2012 in relation to a new Destination Management role for the council.

The consultation for Destination Management invited local residents, local business representatives and stakeholders from the tourism economy to submit any views or comments they had on the proposals outlined in the October 2012 Cabinet Report.

Comments received as part of this consultation exercise would help shape the final model for implementation.

Methodology

The consultation took place using various mechanisms available to the council:

- Online consultation survey
- Paper copy questionnaires circulated to libraries, public access points in council buildings and to tourism venues in Bury town centre.
- Asking for written submissions/ correspondence in hard copy or via email
- A consultation event with stakeholders
- Emails to schools, local business groups, third sector representatives, councillors, council employees and the local residents database.
- Promotion of the consultation on the council website, via social media and in the local media
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Face to face meetings with staff members and key stakeholders

It was initially proposed that the consultation ran for four weeks from 5 to 30 November, however following comments and feedback from the consultation event held on the 26 November it was agreed to extend the consultation for a further week so that it closed on 7 December 2012.

Analysis of consultation results

General comments on consultation:

We invited schools and colleges in the borough to comment on the proposals and we also sent information to representatives from the third sector. We have not received any specific comments or feedback from these groups.

Many comments were received throughout the consultation process which indicated that those who use and access the services provided by both the current tourism development and business support teams at the council valued the role and work in this area. Throughout the consultation we received a high level of input from business group chairs and representatives, the Fusilier Museum and from members of staff. However, it is important to note that input and comment from a wider cross section of those who live, work or study in the borough does not appear to be prevalent when analysing the results.

Correspondence

48 pieces of correspondence were received via email or in hard copy throughout the consultation process. This included correspondence from:

- Staff members
- Local residents
- Local business group representatives
- Wider stakeholders from the tourism sector including The North West Tourist Guides Association, a blue badge guide and the town crier
- Representatives from the council's Arts and Museums Service
- Event organisers

Stakeholder Event

The consultation event was held on 26 November in the Elizabethan Suite. 38 individuals attended the event. The session was split into three sections, an overview of the proposals for Destination Management, a focus group session with questions to help steer and facilitate discussion around key issues and a wider question and answer session. Facilitators made notes of all the key points discussed at the session and these have been included in the summary below.

Online questionnaire

The consultation was promoted on the front page of the council website and has received 251 responses. Any additional comments made have been included in the summary below.

Summary of key themes:

Comments relating to Business Support function	Frequency
Value business support and support from staff	10
Reduced support to business groups = concern and should look for an alternative	6
Destination Management posts should contain business support function	6
Business should play a greater role in supporting tourism function in the borough	5
Events/ business groups would not take place without experienced dedicated council support	5

Need to support businesses in tough times	4
Changes will question the good will of business group members who put time into organising the events	4
Cannot run business groups solely with volunteers	4
Businesses cite lots of examples where they have worked in conjunction with us and in some cases taken a lead role on events. However, feel the support role provided by the council is beneficial	3
Impact on business rates/ pay council tax should receive support	2
Capacity for businesses to be ambitious questioned	2
Do not think that Township Forum staff should take on a wider business support role	2
Business groups should have had more involvement in formulating proposals	2
Business Support is more than just events and tourism	2
Lack of support for township/ communities	1
If businesses close due to reduced support from tourism overall offer will suffer	1
We can however offer services, space, venues, time and expertise to a central business support contact within the council who can coordinate our resources	1
Loss of business support is a step back in time	1

Comments relating to Bury Ambassador Programme	Frequency
concern about ambassadors programme	22
oppose Bury Ambassador proposal	13
need professionals as well as volunteers	10
Ambassador scheme only works in conjunction with TIC's/ needs to be well organised with an infrastructure behind it	3
Volunteers could not be found for Light Night – had to use pool from Greater Manchester	1
Need more money for volunteers	1
Support the concept of a pop-up TIC service	1

General	Frequency
Need face to face contact not computers/ value personal contact	31
No cuts in this area	13
oppose consultation format/ wording on questionnaire	11
Look for alternate savings -	10
Not everyone has access to a PC/ smart phone technology/ do not need	10
Should not contribute to Marketing Manchester on an annual basis	7
Websites and apps should be a priority	6
What is the value of Marketing Manchester/ STEAM	5
Need more detail on the new proposals	5
Cost cutting/ target lower paid staff	3
Concern about proposed staffing structure/ wages	3
No evidence provided to say that the proposal will work	2
Look at alternate funding arrangements/ funding from external organisations	2
Should consider how tourism and cultural economy can have better linkages	1
Budget cut will affect the ability of remaining staff to deliver the service as it is now	1

Proposals will have an adverse affect on planning for a local economy and work supports the National Planning Policy Framework as well as other strategic objectives	1
Remove overtime allocation	1
Need to look at community priorities as well as council's	1
Should Bury Market organize their own activities	1
Do not increase initiatives budget	1
This area of work requires public sector leadership	1
Staff members should not be based in Knowsley Place	1

Individuals who attended the stakeholder event took part in a consultation exercise which asked them say how they would allocate the budget in percentage terms for destination management. The average results are:

Description	Avg % budget allocation
Staffing costs	65.4
Web technology	0.86
STEAM/ Marketing Manchester	3.245714
Initiatives/ Events	10.028
Pop up service and Bury ambassadors	1.428571
Other allocations	11.333333

The online survey asked consultees to strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with a range of statements about the proposals for Destination Management.

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.						
Answer Options	Strongly agree	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Response Count
The council has a role in ensuring that Bury's visitor economy encourages growth, income and jobs for local businesses	126	78	7	3	3	217
The council should play a role alongside local businesses, community group and partners to co-ordinate a range of events throughout the year which will attract visitors to the borough	108	86	7	8	5	214
If the council plays a role in these events it should ensure that these are costs neutral to the tax payer (i.e. they do not operate at a loss for the council)	79	63	27	36	8	213
The council should work alongside tourism attractions as well as wider partners, communities and the private sector to promote Bury	101	97	7	8	1	214

Bury needs to promote itself as part of the wider Greater Manchester tourism economy	88	75	17	28	5	213
Bury should fully utilise and take advantage of new technology to promote the borough (e.g. website, social media, apps)	110	74	17	10	2	213
Volunteers have a role to play in tourism as they can help promote the best bits of Bury to visitors, provide information and ensure that events run safely.	59	80	22	32	23	216
<i>answered question</i>						218
<i>skipped question</i>						33

Further information:

Policy and Improvement Team
planforchange@bury.gov.uk