

Committee: **Regeneration Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **9th February 2022**

Report Subject: **Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr D Davies, Executive Member Regeneration and Economic Development**

Report Submitted by: **Owen Ashton, Service Manager – Business & Regeneration**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
18.01.2022	20.01.2022	31.01.22			09.02.2022			

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Members endorsement of the Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy.
- 1.2 The report provides a summary of the Strategy’s content, and the Themes around which a range of projects are based.

2. Background and Current Position

Context

- 2.1 Celebrating the life and legacy of Aneurin Bevan in an appropriate and meaningful way has been a priority for a number of years. In addition to the intrinsic value of celebrating ‘the architect of the NHS’, it has also been seen as a way to help support and promote the area, its heritage, and wider economic regeneration.
- 2.2 In 2018 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, working collaboratively with Visit Wales, commissioned a Strategy with the aim of:
 - Increasing visitor numbers to the area.
 - Raising the profile of the area.
 - Challenge and change perceptions of the area.
 - Encourage the growth and sustainability of existing product.
 - Increase footfall into our town centres.
 - Stimulate and support new regeneration projects.
 - Stimulate and support economic growth through inward investment and job creation.

The Strategy

- 2.3 Following a competitive procurement exercise, a collaborative bid was received from a consortium of consultants including comprising Can Do Team, Letha Consultancy and Wye Knot Tourism who were awarded the commission.

2.4 The consortium co-produced a Strategy in consultation with a range of stakeholders including members of the public, community groups and identified a series of Themes around which projects could be developed. These Themes are:

- Bevan – Creator of the NHS
- Bevan the Politician
- Bevan – Son of Tredegar
- Bevan the Miner and Trade Unionist
- Bevan the Inspiring Orator and Debater
- Bevan the Bibliophile and Author

2.5 A range of projects have been identified within the context of these themes and are included in the attached Executive Summary. Since the projects have been identified, due to a range of factors including time elapsed due to Covid-19 further work is needed to establish more up-to-date costs for the projects identified.

Current Position

2.6 The Strategy ties into and complements the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Plan (DMP) and will provide a framework for delivering local projects under the strategic umbrella of the DMP.

2.7 Approval is being sought to endorse the proposals and enable officers to further develop the projects, including feasibility work and establish updated costs. Should this be endorsed, a further report will be presented in future updating on progress on the development and delivery of projects.

3. Options for Recommendation

3.1 Option one – Scrutiny support the Aneurin Bevan Strategy and recommend approval by the Executive.

3.2 Option two – The Aneurin Bevan Strategy is supported with amendments requested, prior to approval by the Executive Committee.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

4.1 Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board: Established in April 2016, and is currently working towards preparing a Well-being Plan for the area. Tourism will offer an opportunity in Blaenau Gwent to help the area contribute towards the long-term future of the area.

4.2 The Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022
The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 (Section 15), places a duty on all Local Authorities in Wales to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement. As part of this, the Council is required to develop a Corporate

Plan. The priorities developed for the Corporate Plan incorporate the previous Council Well-being Objectives and also represent our Improvement Objectives, as required by the Local Government (Wales) Measure.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 Impact on Budget (*short and long term impact*)

5.1.1 The Strategy will be developed and delivered collaboratively with partners, with funding sought from a range of sources including internal budgets e.g. Destination Management and where necessary from external funders.

5.1.2 The Strategy will support the Authority in making funding applications to external funding bodies including Welsh Government, Visit Wales and others, to deliver projects.

5.1.3 Any priorities identified within the Strategy requiring additional funding will be reported as appropriate, identifying any potential impact on BGCBC resources.

5.1.4 Retention of the Destination Management budget is essential to supporting the five-year delivery of the Aneurin Bevan Strategy.

5.2 Risk including Mitigating Actions

5.2.1 The Strategy will form part of the wider DMP which is Blaenau Gwent's strategic document to support destination related activity. Without such a Strategy it will be difficult to ensure buy-in from stakeholder and secure funding to deliver projects.

5.2.2 Reduction in available staff resources will impact upon the Council's ability to implement activity contained within the action plan.

5.2.3 There is a risk of partner organisations not prioritising agreed actions which could negatively impact upon the implementation of the overall plan.

5.2.4 Failure of local tourism stakeholders to engage in the Destination Management Partnership will result in a weak monitoring of the Strategy. The Destination Management Officer will dedicate time to strengthening the partnership membership.

5.3 *Legal*

5.3.1 There are no legal implications to the development of the Strategy at this stage. Any activities arising as a result of the Strategy will be delivered within existing legal governance arrangements.

5.4 **Human Resources**

- 5.4.1 Delivery of the Strategy will be co-ordinated through the Council's Destination Management Officer and overseen by the Destination Management Partnership

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

- 6.1.1 Nationally - The Strategy will form part of the DMP which is referenced Welsh Government's / Visit Wales new tourism framework and The Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- 6.1.2 Regionally – South Wales Tourism Forum, South East Wales Destination Management Group and South East Wales Destination Implementation Group
- 6.1.3 Locally - Blaenau Gwent Public Service Board, the Blaenau Gwent Local Plan 2018-2022 and the Blaenau Gwent Corporate Plan.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

- 6.2.1 The Strategy could benefit local businesses, residents and visitors alike through developing a more prosperous economy, pleasant environment and inspiring pride in our heritage and the areas role in the establishment of the NHS.

6.3 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

The Destination Management Partnership meet quarterly at various venues across the County Borough. The group has increased membership and is a strong and cohesive voice for local tourism and will support and oversee the development and delivery of the Strategy.

- 6.3.1 The Destination Management Officer regularly engages with stakeholders and the community to ensure that their voices are heard and acted upon and ongoing consultation will be undertaken on the development and delivery of the Strategy.

6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

- 6.4.1 The BGDMP lifetime has been extended from 3 years to 5 years to allow the partnership to take a long term vision for tourism. This will assist in providing continuity of oversight for the Strategy.

6.5 **Preventative focus**

- 6.5.1 Without a Strategy there will be no focus and monitoring of delivery nor a framework in place to secure funding for projects.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

6.6.1 The Local Authority works collaboratively with Welsh Government, other local authorities, local businesses, trusts, public bodies and the voluntary sector in delivering the Destination Management Plan of which the Strategy forms a part. Ongoing consultation with the community will ensure that projects are supported and are collaboratively delivered.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

6.7.1 Prosperous - The Destination Management Plan aims to improve the profitability of business performance through building the capacity of the industry.

6.7.2 Healthier - walking and activities in the outdoors through the development of walking and cycling routes will benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and visitors.

6.7.3 Equal- By making recreational activities accessible to all.

6.7.4 Culture & Language - Through the use of the Welsh language in all our promotional materials and on line and celebrating our heritage and culture.

6.7.5 Globally Responsible - By protecting and promoting our unique natural and built environment, encouraging use of sustainable transport and supporting businesses in securing the Green Dragon environmental standard awarded to organisations that are taking action to control their impacts on the environment.

6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

6.8.1 The Strategy and the wider DMP embraces all residents and visitors. It has no adverse impact on people or groups from the nine protected characteristics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The delivery of the Strategy will be overseen and monitored quarterly through the Blaenau Gwent Destination Management Partnership.

7.2 Annual updates will be provided to Scrutiny Committee and Executive and on request.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 - Aneurin Bevan Destination Strategy Executive Summary