

Report to:	TOURISM, RESOURCES AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Philip Welsh, Head of Visitor Economy
Date of Meeting	13 September 2017

TOURISM PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide the Committee with information on tourism performance using various indicators.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the performance of Tourism and associated services and to identify any further areas for scrutiny as appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure constructive and robust scrutiny of the report, which has been requested by the Committee.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

Not applicable

4.0 Council Vision/Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

5.0 Background Information

- 5.1 The report provides information on tourism performance using various indicators, including number of visits; the overall value of the visitor economy and number of jobs supported; footfall on the Promenade and town centre; car parking; tram and rail usage; satisfaction ratings and events. There is additional information on sales of the Blackpool Resort Pass, usage of Tourist Information services, and results of some of the Blackpool Has It All destination marketing campaign for 2017.
- 5.2 The report is to be considered alongside the Council Plan Performance Report Q1 2017/2018 – Visitor and Cultural Economy, which is item 7 on the agenda. The headline summary, illustrated in that report, covers the 2016 tourism season and details the overall number of visits, the ratio of day to staying visitors, the value of the visitor economy and the number of tourism jobs supported. This data is derived from the annual STEAM survey, a methodology used by a wide number of destination marketing organisations in the UK including Visit England.
- 5.3 The second set of data in this report provides a “snapshot” of levels of activity in the resort between July 2016 and June 2017, including sales of the Blackpool Resort Pass; tram usage; footfall; inbound rail travel; use of the Tourist Information Centre; and usage of the VisitBlackpool website.
- 5.4 By and large, the indicators show a very positive picture for the resort, with good growth across a number of areas.
- 5.5 The latest Visit England figures reaffirm Blackpool’s position as the UK’s leading seaside destination for day visitors, ranked first among all seaside destinations.
- 5.6 As always, the challenge for the resort is to convert a higher percentage of day visitors into staying visitors as that has far greater impact on the wider visitor economy.

The various tables are set out below:

Town Centre: Monthly Footfall (24hr)

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	2,830,941	2,789,242	2,532,051	2,225,619
August	3,085,538	2,491,717	2,572,176	*2,688,159
September	2,552,651	2,983,718	2,726,806	2,416,582
October	2,654,852	2,624,230	2,659,827	*2,620,629
November	1,996,937	1,891,998	1,438,985	1,308,193
December	1,437,716	1,524,575	1,356,227	1,223,614
January	815,202	886,219	759,349	*999,125
February	832,795	1,129,666	1,027,744	1,075,565
March	1,505,904	1,401,736	1,233,574	1,215,996
April	1,629,541	1,433,133	1,454,419	*1,680,054
May	2,131,019	1,945,661	1,839,345	1,817,313
June	2,106,542	2,084,723	1,934,011	1,965,484
Total	23,579,638	23,186,617	21,534,514	21,236,334

* Note that both the January and April 2017 foot count totals are the highest in five years. The October footfall in 2016 is only marginally short (-1.5%) of the October record set in 2015 and the August 2016 total is the highest for three years.

Promenade: Monthly Footfall (24hr)

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	885,797	803,904	710,355	724,099
August	894,354	563,184	700,496	955,116
September	509,619	753,587	741,903	*772,805
October	307,623	500,031	655,771	*760,334
November	253,645	254,780	246,831	*269,521
December	156,940	169,085	169,252	166,567
January	73,277	96,447	90,966	*125,093
February	135,263	168,274	175,630	176,450
March	244,023	245,007	245,268	231,423
April	360,433	326,932	366,617	407,645
May	455,760	455,901	494,222	450,517
June	488,291	482,350	530,240	513,024
Total	4,765,025	4,819,482	5,127,551	*5,552,594

* Note that the January 2017 Promenade foot count total is a monthly record for the Coral Island sensor. Monthly records were also set in 2016 for September, October and November. The July to June 2016/17 total was higher than each of the 3 previous years culminating in over 5.5 million foot counts.

Tourist Information Centre: Monthly Visits

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	12,964	11,927	12,753	*12,978
August	20,550	34,100	34,503	32,353
September	6,078	7,012	13,022	12,102
October	12,128	13,813	17,061	16,260
November	2,924	1,396	2,069	2,556
December	903	910	1,059	*1,231
January	1,546	1,497	1,434	1,452
February	1,702	2,374	3,098	2,774
March	1,652	2,068	2,147	2,522
April	3,646	3,298	3,289	*4,144
May	4,556	5,338	4,515	4,783
June	4,861	5,324	5,167	4,296
Total	73,510	89,057	100,117	97,451

* Monthly records were set in April 2017, July 2016 and December 2016.

VisitBlackpool.com: Unique Monthly Website Visits

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	103,761	132,102	216,076	208,020
August	172,824	206,373	321,072	*330,019
September	116,996	137,901	279,706	*301,305
October	122,778	132,056	171,163	*226,601
November	72,201	75,825	79,122	*122,090
December	39,252	46,676	53,680	*63,582
January	57,581	51,088	73,024	*84,909
February	51,838	56,653	77,402	*86,266
March	72,518	88,763	89,526	*95,751
April	94,452	84,366	99,698	*102,698
May	104,117	144,979	126,862	105,397
June	123,041	131,984	108,081	115,567
Total	1,131,359	1,288,766	1,695,412	1,842,205

* The VisitBlackpool website has had a record breaking 12 months with over 1.8 million visits in total.

Unprecedented monthly website visits were achieved for 9 consecutive months between August 2016 and April 2017. The Visit Blackpool website was re-designed and relaunched at the start of 2017 and has shown significant growth year to date.

Resort Pass: Monthly Sales

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	3,621	3,529	3,379	*4,040
August	3,496	3,147	3,201	*3,511
September	1,241	1,224	1,437	*1,438
October	2,081	1,517	1,921	*2,439
November	34	17	9	5
December	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
January	N/A	N/A	38	N/A
February	49	51	248	148
March	297	367	883	486
April	956	722	1,000	*1,150
May	1,082	838	1,475	1,338
June	1,396	1,316	1,745	1,369
Total	14,253	12,728	15,336	15,924

* The Resort Pass had an exceptional 2016 tourist season with monthly records achieved throughout the period from July to October. Sales in the last 12 months total an unprecedented 15,924 with a further monthly sales record set in April 2017.

Monthly Rail Passengers (Inbound)

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July (Period 4)	134,199	120,091	124,006	121,832
August (Period 5)	160,848	179,366	174,593	*191,030
September (Period 6)	138,484	145,657	131,666	*152,840
October (Periods 7 & 8)	92,970	99,216	99,216	101,671
November (Period 9)	51,348	56,446	49,698	56,310
December (Period 10)	41,056	43,001	43,640	*46,946
January (Period 11)	43,928	46,462	48,341	46,154
February (Period 12)	56,906	64,778	70,105	63,232
March (Period 13)	67,758	67,752	78,448	64,700
April (Period 1)	115,809	104,027	99,649	111,137
May (Period 2)	96,879	100,038	105,469	102,512
June (Period 3)	115,317	71,741	126,264	113,287
Total	1,115,500	1,098,575	1,151,095	1,171,651

* The 12 month period from July 2016 to June 2017 is the busiest on record, despite the continued disruption of the electrification works across the region, with over 1.17 million inbound rail passenger journeys made to Blackpool. Unprecedented numbers of monthly inbound rail passengers were registered in August, September and December 2016.

Monthly Tram Passengers

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	521,189	475,058	551,591	593,874
August	578,115	516,164	685,457	684,586
September	502,546	531,543	627,640	610,893
October	577,716	570,947	827,064	753,941
November	330,367	290,292	289,503	333,902
December	187,547	167,500	181,711	231,875
January	181,663	153,590	171,567	*208,055
February	193,858	197,113	215,895	*234,096
March	260,252	236,219	280,133	*281,398
April	292,159	361,406	358,864	*430,640
May	331,909	378,653	395,736	*409,409
June	332,180	374,090	425,044	417,903
Total	4,289,501	4,252,575	5,010,205	5,190,572

* The tram network goes from strength to strength with almost 5.2 million passengers using the service over the period July 2016 to June 2017. This was largely due to a busy end to 2016 and impressive start to 2017, which culminated in unparalleled numbers of passengers using the service over seven consecutive months from November 2016 to May 2017.

Council Car Parks: Monthly Ticket Sales

Month	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	88,769	95,879	102,264	*106,647
August	110,919	127,804	130,707	130,130
September	87,175	111,893	119,393	110,929
October	107,095	121,385	143,735	141,672
November	73,860	77,956	69,133	72,735
December	58,507	60,413	63,934	*69,305
January	43,480	44,945	49,522	*58,276
February	45,895	57,298	62,192	*67,589
March	66,773	80,006	77,469	76,197
April	89,114	90,253	84,250	*105,379
May	88,221	91,809	93,462	91,408
June	79,150	78,025	81,905	*87,196
Total	938,958	1,037,666	1,077,966	1,117,463

* Pay and Display ticket sales at Council operated car parks continue to rise year on year with over 1.1 million sales between July 2016 and June 2017. Monthly sales records were achieved in January, February, April and June, indicating a strong start to 2017.

- 5.7 This report also sets out some initial findings from the 2017 Blackpool Has It All destination marketing campaign. This campaign, now in its fourth year, comprises three elements – PR, digital media and primetime TV advertising in Scotland and the north of England.
- 5.8 The PR element is intended to change public and media perceptions about Blackpool. One of the tools used to aid this is the organisation of Press trips where journalists can experience for themselves all that the resort has to offer.
- 5.9 Appendix 8(a) shows the number of Press trips generated year to date. This initiative has been hugely successful, with all of the subsequent coverage showing Blackpool in a positive light.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 8(a): Press trips generated

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Not applicable

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None