

Visit Cambridge

Memorandum of Understanding

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1. Background

- 1.1 Cambridge City Council, Cambridge BID (Business Improvement District), Fitzwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd and King's College, Cambridge, have formed a partnership to establish a Destination Management Organisation (DMO)¹ for Cambridge city to be titled – 'Visit Cambridge'.
- 1.2 The partnership was established to support the continuation of DMO services following the closure of the previous DMO company, Visit Cambridge and Beyond (VCB), in July, 2020. The four founding partners collectively acquired the former DMO's intangible assets at auction; and are making them available to support the establishment of the new DMO partnership.

2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The overarching aim of the partnership is to fulfil the role of a DMO for Cambridge city.
- 2.2 The partnership's specific objectives are:

¹ A DMO is defined by the UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organisation) as, "the leading organisational entity which may encompass the various authorities, stakeholders and professionals and facilitates partnerships towards a collective destination vision". A DMO's role is to lead and coordinate activities under a coherent strategy in pursuit of a common goal, namely the competitiveness and sustainability of the tourism destination.

- 2.2.1 To develop and manage the delivery of a Destination Management Plan (DMP) for the city, based on sustainable development principles²
- 2.2.2 To support the recovery and sustainable development of the city's tourism sector
- 2.2.3 To market and promote the city and represent the city's tourism sector locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- 2.2.4 To manage the DMOs assets in accordance with sustainable development principles and use any income generated to reinvest in the DMO and sustainable tourism development.

3. Activities

3.1 The core activities to be delivered by the partnership are as follows:

- Visitor welcome
- Quality assurance
- Marketing and promotion
- Strategic planning
- Project/ product development
- Partnership development
- Lobbying

² Sustainable tourism development is defined by UNWTO as, "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities".

3.2 The initial timeframe for partnership activities will be 3 years, commencing in 2020/21

3.3 Activities will be reviewed annually to ensure that they are being delivered as agreed, and that they are having the intended impact.

4. Governance

4.1 The partnership will be known as 'Visit Cambridge'

4.2 The partnership has no legal status, though the need for becoming legally constituted will be kept under review.

4.3 The partnership is made up of the following organisations, with each organisation identifying an agreed representative to sit on the DMO Board:

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridge BID Ltd
- Fitwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd
- King's College, Cambridge

4.4 The Board will consider applications for partnership membership against agreed criteria.

4.5 The Board is able to co-opt additional members, either to fill strategic gaps in representation or to address specific skill/ resource needs, as required.

4.6 The DMO management board will be chaired by Cambridge City Council's nominated lead officer. The chair will be responsible for convening Board

meetings and agreeing associated agendas and supporting papers for circulation by the secretariat.

- 4.7 The secretariat of the Board will be provided by Cambridge City Council. The secretariat will be responsible for taking a note of the meeting, which will be circulated within 5 working days of the meeting; and for circulating the meeting agenda and associated supporting papers no less than 2 working days prior to a meeting.
- 4.8 The partnership will set up a bank account in its name. The partnership's finances will be managed by Cambridge City Council, who will provide the Board with required financial reports, including an annual budget plan and end of year report.
- 4.9 The Board will make decisions based on consensus. Where a consensus cannot be achieved, the decision will be put to a vote, with the results formally recorded in the note of the meeting. Each organisation represented on the Board has a single vote facility, with the Board chair having a casting vote.

5. Asset management

- 5.1 Cambridge City Council, Cambridge BID Ltd, Fitzwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd and King's College, Cambridge, have collectively acquired the former DMO's intangible assets at auction. An inventory of these acquired assets and associated equity partner share is included in appendix A.
- 5.2 The owners of the acquired assets (as detailed in appendix A) have agreed

for these assets to be made available to the DMO to develop and manage.

5.3 Should any owner of the acquired assets wish to sell their equity stake in the assets, this should be offered, in the first instance, to the other remaining owners to acquire. Should the remaining asset owners not be willing to acquire any available stake, then it can only be sold to an approved third party organisation, as agreed by the other remaining asset owners.

6. Disclaimer

6.1 It should be noted that by signing this document or by participating in the DMO partnership, the partners are not committing to legally binding obligations. It is intended that the partners remain independent of each other and that their collaboration and use of the term 'partner' does not constitute the creation of a legal entity, nor authorise the entry into a commitment for or on behalf of each other.

Signed on behalf of **Cambridge City Council**

..... Date
[NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of **Cambridge BID Ltd**

..... Date
[NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of **Fitzwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd**

..... Date
[NAME, POSITION]

Signed on behalf of **King's College, Cambridge**

..... Date
[NAME, POSITION]

Appendix A:

Visit Cambridge and Beyond assets acquired at auction

Cambridge City Council, Cambridge BID Ltd, Fitzwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd and King's College, Cambridge, collectively acquired the following former DMO's Intangible assets at auction in July, 2020; and are making them available to support the establishment of the new DMO partnership. The respective partner financial contributions to acquire the assets at auction is as follows:

- Cambridge City Council - £14000
- Cambridge BID Ltd - £14000
- Fitzwilliam Museum (Enterprises) Ltd - £7000
- King's College, Cambridge - £7000

The company trading name & style

The company traded as Visit Cambridge & Beyond and provided the main tourism board in Cambridge offering tours, tour guides, selling tickets and all other related products for marketing the city and surrounding area. Previously part of the local authority the tourism sector was privatised in 2015 when Visit Cambridge & Beyond was established.

The company website domain & content

The web domain URL is www.visitcambridge.org is owned by the company and the site administered by Netservers. The site is currently suspended, but at its peak attracted up to two million visitors a year. More recently visitor numbers to the site have been circa 1.75 million per annum. Emails are linked to this address.

The booking engine and associated database of private clients is held by a third party. It may be possible to negotiate an arrangement for the third party to continue to act on behalf of a purchaser.

Company Profiles and Ratings

The company has profiles on GetYourGuide and TripAdvisor (Viator) under the brand "Official Guided Tours of Cambridge".

Appendix 2:

UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organisation)

- Destination Management guidance

The following extracts relating to Destination Management are taken from the UNWTO website: <https://www.unwto.org/policy-destination-management>

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Destination management consists of the coordinated management of all the elements that make up a tourism destination. Destination management takes a strategic approach to link-up these sometimes very separate elements for the better management of the destination. Joined up management can help to avoid overlapping functions and duplication of effort with regards to promotion, visitor services, training, business support and identify any management gaps that are not being addressed.

Destination management calls for a coalition of many organisations and interests working towards a common goal, ultimately being the assurance of the competitiveness and sustainability of the tourism destination. The Destination Management Organization's (DMO) role should be to lead and coordinate activities under a coherent strategy in pursuit of this common goal.

Though DMOs have typically undertaken marketing activities, their remit is becoming far broader, to become a strategic leader in destination development. This is a vital ingredient for success in every tourism destination and many destinations now have DMOs to lead the way.

From a traditionally marketing and promotion focus the trend is to become leading organisations with a broader mandate which includes strategic planning, coordination and management of activities within an adequate governance structure with the integration of different stakeholders operating in the destination under a common goal. Destinations wherein such an organisation is not still in place are increasingly creating or plan to create a DMO as the organisational entity to lead the way.

UNWTO has identified three areas of key performance in destination management at DMO level: Strategic Leadership, Effective Implementation and Efficient Governance.

UNWTO supports its Members and Destination Management/Marketing Organisations through the [UNWTO.QUEST](#) - a **DMO Certification System**. **UNWTO.QUEST** promotes quality and excellence in DMOs planning, management and governance of tourism, by means of capacity building. UNWTO.QUEST Certification evaluates the three areas of key performance in destination management at DMO level: Strategic Leadership, Effective Implementation and Efficient Governance. With a training and capacity building component, UNWTO.QUEST is a strategic tool which allows the DMOs to implement an improvement plan to achieve the criteria and standards of the Certification with the aim of enhancing their management processes and thus contribute to the competitiveness and sustainability of the destinations they represent.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

A destination management organisation (DMO) is "the leading organisational entity which may encompass the various authorities, stakeholders and professionals and facilitates partnerships towards a collective destination vision".

The governance structures of DMOs vary from a single public authority to a public-private partnership model – to a lesser extent also entirely private models are found – with the key role of initiating, coordinating and managing certain activities which will be further explored in the next pages.

The functions of the DMOs may vary from national to regional and local levels depending on the current and potential needs, as well as on the decentralisation level of the public administration. Convention and Visitors Bureaus are also widely considered as DMOs, although their remit is primarily focused on promoting the destination for the meetings industry. Not all tourism destinations have a DMO.

It can be drawn up from the definition above, that traditionally responsible for destination marketing, the role of the DMO is becoming far broader. Development of sustainable governance institutions requires partnerships beyond traditional organisational boundaries to include community and non-governmental actors in decision-making and management. The governance models differ according to the areas to be covered and they increasingly require new ways of thinking and collaborating.

The DMO emerges as a key player in the development and management of tourism at destination level, although its mandate and scope of action will be determined by its context, maturity of the destination, level of decentralisation, priorities in the destination, resources and other factors. Accordingly, the starting point for a DMO should be to assess the destination's current situation for which ideally a consultation process should be conducted whereby all key stakeholders in the destination participate: both public and private, as well as civil society (local community and residents, academia, NGOs, indigenous communities, among others). Once the scene is set, the DMO will be positioned to fix a road map and formulate a strategy for the destination adapted to the needs, competences and priorities resulting from this participative process.

The successful performance of the DMO will be determined by its capacity to obtain the credibility and trust of all stakeholders in the destination and beyond its boundaries. As the leading organisational entity in the destination, the DMO needs to get the support of all acting stakeholders and be considered as the legitimised entity – institutionally, legally and operationally speaking – to lead the management of tourism in the destination. For this to happen, an appropriate governance model stands as a key element.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNWTO definition: "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities"

Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

1. Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
3. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists, raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices amongst them.