

## Scoping document for Scrutiny review

**What are the main issues?** *what is the policy background?, how does it link to the councils corporate priorities?*

### Introduction

There is currently no strategic tourism provision for the borough of Brent. Whilst tourism related activities/services are available – entertainment, accommodation and catering – these are delivered in a piece-meal fashion with no one organisation taking a positive lead or direction. This means that any benefits to local people and the community at large are incidental. There is also a significant market for friends and family visitors to the borough that is currently not being targeted.

There is huge potential for tourism in Brent. The borough already has a number of unique and special attractions such as the national stadium, Wembley Arena, Ealing Road, Neasden Temple, Tricycle Theatre and Brent will be thrust onto the international stage again when Wembley Stadium opens.

Tourism from visitors and residents should be regarded as a priority for the council for the following key reasons;

In London tourism is a huge generator of jobs and wealth, and a key part of the city's economy. It also has the potential to continue growing strongly for years to come. The total tourism spending in London amounts to around £15bn pa. **In 2004 almost £60 million was spent in Brent with overseas visitors contributing 60% of this amount** (Local Area Tourism Impact Model report supplied by GLA Economics for LDA).

There are areas of regeneration in Brent that will focus mainly on attracting external visitors and it will be a missed opportunity if these people were not targeted to visit other areas in the borough.

The Mayor's strategy for tourism in London is to disperse tourists around London and encourage them to visit or stay in the outer boroughs rather than spending their whole time in central London.

Visit London, the agency that promotes London as a visitor destination, currently focuses on the central boroughs despite having a brief and resources from the Mayor to promote the whole of London. If Brent had a tourism officer or tourism resource they could provide regular information and work on campaigns to promote the borough's attractions and benefits. They could also proactively lobby for the area.

### How does it link to the council's corporate strategy?

The draft corporate strategy recognises that tourism benefits the economy and suggests the following:

'The redevelopment of Wembley and the opening of the Wembley Stadium offers a unique opportunity for leisure led regeneration. We will seize that opportunity working with developers to create an area that brings maximum social and economic benefits to local residents, including employment, new retail outlets, sports facilities and housing. **We will develop a programme of activities to ensure local people benefit from the 2012 Olympics and a tourism strategy that balances economic needs with those of local residents**'.

Tourism is also included in the policy programme for the joint administration 2006-2010 in the area of 'more choice in sport, leisure and facilities' in point two 'we will give a real focus to Brent as a tourist destination.'

The other key benefit is that the council can work in partnership with the attractions and key providers to encourage further investment in the area.

### **What is the policy background?**

There has been no tourism policy at Brent for at least ten years.

**Why are we looking at this area?** Have there been recent legislation/policy changes? Are there any performance or budgetary issues?,

The regeneration of Wembley and the potential for millions of visitors to come to the borough (some for the first time) gives Brent a real opportunity to promote its benefits and attractions as well as generate jobs and wealth for the area.

As tourists visit London for the second or third time they want to experience other areas and different cultures in London. Brent is ideal for this experience.

Interest from residents and visitors in Brent, as an Olympic borough, is a key area that should be capitalised on.

Tourism and the service industries that support it are a growth area.

**What should the review cover?** Give brief outline of what members could focus on, which partners to engage with, how residents/public can be involved.

- A tourism audit has already been carried out in March 2006 and this should be reviewed by councillors along with the activities undertaken from that audit.
- Partnership work with Wembley National Stadium Ltd, Live Nation,

Quintain, hotels, transport providers, Olympics committee etc.

- Partnership work with neighbouring boroughs. Hammersmith and Fulham and Harrow currently have a tourism officer/manager where joint lobbying and campaigns could be implemented.

**What could the review achieve?**, influence policy change?, improvement to service delivery?, budget savings?, develop partnerships?.

The key objectives of such a review (in order) would be to:

- To create tourist provision in the borough (Visitor Development Officer for leisure and business tourism).
- Increase awareness of attractions and ethnically diverse benefits of the borough.
- Influence tourist movement from central London to external boroughs by lobbying Visit London and working with partner boroughs.
- Work in partnership with external organisations.
- Increase the number of business and leisure tourists visiting the borough and spending in the area.