

## 7 Reports

### 7.1 Delivery of Tourism and Visitor Promotions Services

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**Authoriser:** Bede Carran, Chief Executive

#### **Recommendation**

That Council decides on a preferred service delivery model for delivery of its tourism and visitor promotions strategy.

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 To present Council with options for the delivery of Council's tourism and visitor promotions services.

#### **Assessment of Significance**

- 2 The consideration of options for the delivery of Council's tourism and visitor promotions services is considered of low to medium significance in accordance with Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.
- 3 The Policy requires Council to consider the degree to which a decision is inconsistent with one already made in a Council policy or strategy. The Timaru District Visitor Strategy, adopted by the Community Development Committee on 30 June 2019 includes a strategic initiative to "develop greater tourism resource within Timaru District Council to drive the implementation of the Visitor Strategy in partnership with the wider tourism sector."<sup>1</sup> Strategic actions in the document include the appointment a visitor promotions specialist within Timaru District Council.
- 4 While the Strategy envisaged that visitor promotion services would be delivered in-house, it was not designed to preclude alternative service delivery methods. Should Council decide to change the service delivery method for tourism and visitor promotions services to provision by an external party, the Visitor Strategy could be amended to reflect this.
- 5 If the levels of service and the cost of the delivery of these services were to change as a result of any decision, Council may wish to consider consultation with key tourism industry stakeholders, in accordance with the Significance and Engagement Policy.

#### **Background**

- 6 Council's tourism and visitor promotions services have been delivered through several different models in recent years.

#### **2009 - 2014**

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<sup>1</sup> Timaru District Visitor Strategy, p. 14.

- 7 Prior to 2009, the Council Controlled Organisation (CCO) Timaru District Promotions Trust (trading as Central South Island Tourism) delivered district marketing services on behalf of the Timaru District Council.
- 8 In 2009, as the result of a proposal to merge the Timaru District Promotions Trust and the Aoraki Development Trust, a new trust, Aoraki Development and Promotions Trust (trading as Aoraki Development, Business and Tourism) (ADBT) was established to undertake the economic development and district promotions activities on behalf of Council. Council's rationale for the merger was to increase business efficiencies, reduce overheads and allow for seamless communication between the economic development agency and the regional tourism agency.<sup>2</sup>

### 2015 - 2018

- 9 In late 2014 Council expressed a desire to have a larger impact on economic development in the District. Council and the Board of ADBT attended a number of workshops, facilitated by consultant Elizabeth Hughes, and as a result, Council adopted an Economic Development Strategy in February 2015.
- 10 This strategy, and the transition plan which accompanied it, refined the focus of economic development services. A report presented to Council on 28 April 2015 stated:

“Council considered active tourism promotion and support to be the role of the regional tourism association – Christchurch and Canterbury Tourism. “Passive” tourism services – visitor information, local promotions and events, local organisations and services and services, would be integrated into Council facilities or local businesses or provided by the use of technology. Tourism is acknowledged as only one of many different industries in the Timaru district and as such should be supported the way that other businesses and industries are, with forward planning, leadership, excellent services and quality infrastructure and facilities.”<sup>3</sup>
- 11 At this meeting Council resolved to revise the responsibilities for delivery of economic development services, removing tourism services from ADBT's remit, and invited ADBT to revise its Statement of Intent to reflect this.<sup>4</sup>
- 12 ADBT ceased to provide visitor services on 1 October 2015. To address the ongoing need for these services, in late 2015 Council contracted Ngai Tahu Maori Rock Art Trust, and Kiwi Country to provide visitor information services in Timaru and Geraldine respectively. Temuka Library/Service Centre continued to provide visitor information services.
- 13 In September 2016 it was reported to the Policy and Development Committee that the visitor information agencies has been successfully established and Council staff were supporting tourism activities by updating township maps and contributing to the new visitor website. It was raised, that in spite of this work, there remained a gap in visitor/tourism marketing, the provision of collateral, and the promotion of visitor attractions, accommodation providers, and providing for cruise visits.
- 14 The Committee was presented with possible options to remedy this gap:
  - 14.1 Do nothing, and let the visitor industry provide any desired promotion themselves;

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<sup>2</sup> Timaru District Council Meeting Agenda, 9 December 2008

<sup>3</sup> Timaru District Council Meeting Agenda, 28 April 2015, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> Timaru District Council Meeting Minutes, 28 April 2015, p.3.

- 14.2 Employ an in-house resource to facilitate various elements of visitor promotion; or
  - 14.3 Council could contract Experience Mid-Canterbury (EMC), or another District Tourism Organisation, to provide coordinated visitor information and promotion for the Timaru District as envisaged in the Canterbury Regional Economic Development Strategy.
- 15 The Committee resolved to enter into a five-year contract with EMC at a value of \$100,000 per annum.<sup>5</sup>

**2018 - 2020**

- 16 A workshop was held in April 2018 to seek clarity on Council's aims for visitor promotions in the District. Councillors requested staff obtain advice from an independent visitor promotions expert in order to assess options for a strategic approach and service delivery models.<sup>6</sup>
- 17 Visitor Solutions were commissioned to review the level and allocation of tourism funds in the District, the effectiveness and value for money of the existing service delivery, and to make recommendations on a potential new strategy for promoting the Timaru District. Visitor Solutions undertook a review of the District within the national tourism landscape including:
- 17.1 A desk top review of the current tourism product in the region;
  - 17.2 Discussions with staff at ChristchurchNZ regarding Timaru's position in the market and their activity to promote the whole Canterbury region;
  - 17.3 A review of the latest activity report from EMC;
  - 17.4 A collation of the latest tourism relating to New Zealand and the Timaru District;
  - 17.5 A two-day visit to the region to assess current and future potential opportunities;
  - 17.6 Discussions with the (then) Mayor and Chief Executive of the Timaru District Council and the Chief Executive of Aoraki Development to understand their vision and direction for the region.
- 18 On 27 November 2018 the Community Development Committee considered a report from Visitor Solutions which included the following recommendations for Council's future involvement in tourism and visitor promotions:
- 18.1 Exit the contract for visitor services with EMC and repurpose the \$100,000 budget;
  - 18.2 Continue working with ChristchurchNZ with existing budget to promote the region internationally as part of the wider Canterbury region;
  - 18.3 Create a new tourism and events strategy in line with the region's strengths and priorities;
  - 18.4 Review the arrangement regarding the information centre in Timaru and explore options to have the service delivered more efficiently and effectively;
  - 18.5 Employ a full-time senior Tourism and Events Officer to focus on local coordination, content generation, domestic marketing, and event coordination and bidding;
  - 18.6 Seek a funding increase of \$100,000 to bring the total budget close to \$350,000 to enable the recommended actions to be implemented and delivered on, with a view to increasing this to \$400,000 the following year.

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<sup>5</sup> Timaru District Policy and Development Committee, 20 September 2016, p.52.

<sup>6</sup> Timaru District Council Workshop Notes, 17 April 2018, p.3.

- 19 It was noted that the Committee was in favour of these recommendations and resolved the following:
- 19.1 The Councillors agree on the future delivery of visitor promotions in the district including what is the focus in the short and medium term, being a digital approach to visitor and event promotion;
  - 19.2 That a funding request be recommended to the next budget round of either \$350,000 or \$400,000 as recommended by Visitor Solutions;
  - 19.3 That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to exit the current contract with Experience Mid Canterbury and move the delivery of visitor promotions in-house with the creation of 1.5 Full Time Equivalent staff.
  - 19.4 That the Group Manager Community Services be given delegated authority to exit the now expired 3 year contract with Te Ana (Ngai Tahu Maori Rock Art Trust) or extend it by mutual agreement for a further 6 months.<sup>7</sup>
- 20 Following workshops in April 2019 hosted by Visitor Solutions and attended by Councillors, Council officers and key industry stakeholders, a Visitor Strategy was developed and later adopted by the Community Development Committee on 30 July 2019.<sup>8</sup> The Strategy aims to improve leadership and collaboration within the tourism sector and focuses on targeting domestic visitors through improved digital marketing, particularly for local events.
- 21 In line with the 27 November 2018 Committee resolution, a Visitor Promotions Specialist was appointed in July 2019 and charged with the delivery of the Visitor Strategy. The recommended increase to the tourism and visitor promotions budget was not implemented, and the budget remained at \$230,000 for the 2019/20 year. Savings have been realised through repurposing the funding from EMC to the in-house delivery, and by renegotiating a more favourable contract for the delivery of visitor information services in Timaru.

**Timaru District Visitor Strategy (See attached)**

- 22 The Timaru District Visitor Strategy outlines the following objectives:
- 22.1 Develop strong effective leadership that draws the different strands of the District's tourism together to deliver greater prosperity for all.
  - 22.2 Improve collaboration across the Timaru District's tourism (and hospitality) sector to fully unlock economic and social opportunities.
  - 22.3 Improve event opportunities and increase their economic benefit to the District.
  - 22.4 Increase the District's domestic visitor numbers, bed nights and spend rates.
  - 22.5 Improve the quality of our main visitor hubs so that they deliver a better visitor experience and generate more revenue for the District.
  - 22.6 That visitors to the District receive the best quality experiences possible.
- 23 A report prepared in November 2019 highlights the work completed or underway to achieve these objectives. Significant strategic actions achieved include:

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<sup>7</sup> Timaru District Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes, 27 November 2018, p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Timaru District Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes, 30 July 2019, p. 3.

- 23.1 The launch of a joint landing page [welovetimaru.nz](http://welovetimaru.nz) in collaboration with Aoraki Development;
  - 23.2 Increased event advertising through weekly summaries and paid campaigns on Facebook and Instagram;
  - 23.3 Website restructure and refresh;
  - 23.4 Supporting Caroline Bay Playground Upgrade Project Committee with communications and brand development;
  - 23.5 Engagement with Special Events Aoraki, PrimePort, Go Geraldine, Chamber of Commerce and Aoraki Development to initiate work on collaborative strategic actions.
- 24 The Strategy recognises that tourism is a core element of economic development in the Timaru District. Domestic and international visitors spent over \$225 million in the District in 2019.<sup>9</sup> This spend filters across the accommodation, food and beverage, transport, recreational, and general retail industries.

### Service Delivery

- 25 Following the 2019 election, the new Council may wish to consider alternate options for the delivery of tourism and visitor promotions to maximise visitor potential, advance Council's strategic initiatives and achieve synergies with other economic development work streams across the District.

### Other Council's Approaches to Tourism and Visitor Promotions Service Delivery

- 26 Like Timaru, other local authorities of similar size and market share of tourism have used a number of different models to deliver tourism services, with varying degrees of alignment with economic development services.<sup>10</sup>
- 26.1 *Whanganui District Council*<sup>11</sup> – Tourism services were provided in-house until 2014. Following a review of economic development and tourism services a CCO – Whanganui & Partners – was established. The governance structure for this CCO included three advisory boards – Visit, Business and Education Whanganui. A service delivery review was undertaken in 2016 and the advisory boards were disbanded, leaving one governance board for Whanganui & Partners.<sup>12</sup> Whanganui District Council budgeted \$464,000 to Whanganui & Partners for tourism and visitor services in the 2019/20 Annual Plan.<sup>13</sup>
  - 26.2 *Waipa District Council*<sup>14</sup> – Tourism services were provided by the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO), Tourism Waikato, until it folded in 2006. Following this, tourism services were provided in-house, focussing largely on the provision of i-Site visitor centres, maintenance of visitor facilities and a small amount of event sponsorship. When

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<sup>9</sup> Infometrics, Timaru District Economic Profile, Total Tourism Expenditure 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Note: Timaru District's estimated resident population (based on 2013 census data) as at June 30 2019 was 47,900. The total tourism spend in the Tourism District in 2019, as reported by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), was \$230 million.

<sup>11</sup> Whanganui District Council has a population of 47,300 (2019 estimates: 2013 census) and a total tourism spend of over \$130 million (MBIE).

<sup>12</sup> Whanganui District Council Meeting Agenda, 5 December 2019, p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> The total operating budget for Whanganui & Partners in 2019/20 was \$2,803,000

<sup>14</sup> Waipa District Council had a population of 56,200 (2019 estimates: 2013 census) and a total tourism spend of over \$191 million in 2019 (MBIE).

the RTO, Hamilton and Waikato Tourism, was established in 2011 for the central Waikato area, Waipa entered a service delivery agreement for district promotion and tourism services. Waipa continues to fund two i-Site visitor centres through separate service delivery agreements. \$150,000 was budgeted for the service delivery agreement with the RTO in 2019/20. Delivery of Waipa's Economic Development Strategy is managed in-house.

26.3 *Marlborough District Council*<sup>15</sup> – Marlborough's tourism services have been delivered by a CCO, Destination Marlborough, since 1997. \$1,286,000 was budgeted for these services in 2019/20.<sup>16</sup> Economic development services are delivered in-house and through funding provided to external organisations. The budget for these services was \$1,286,000 in 2019/20.

26.4 *Ashburton District Council* – Prior to 2013 Ashburton had a service delivery arrangement with Experience Mid Canterbury (EMC) for tourism and visitor services. As a result of a governance restructure in 2013 EMC became a CCO and has continued to deliver tourism services on behalf of Ashburton District Council, including the i-Site visitor centre located in Methven. The Ashburton i-Site was closed in 2017 following a review. As a result of a service delivery review in 2017 Ashburton's economic development activity, previously delivered through the agency Grow Mid Canterbury, was bought in-house. In the 2019/20 Annual Plan \$441,000 was budgeted for tourism and \$326,000 for economic development.

27 Assessing the benefits and success of the service delivery models of other councils has limited value. It is apparent that a large range of factors have led to the establishment of, and changes in delivery models, including the presence and strength of Regional Tourism Organisations, the district's tourism market share, funding constraints and political machinations.

### Options and Preferred Option

28 Council may wish to consider a number of options for the future delivery of tourism and visitor services for the Timaru District.

29 **In-house service delivery (status quo):** This option would see Council continue to deliver tourism and visitor services by way of internal resourcing. As detailed above, in line with the recommendations of the review undertaken in 2018/19, Council ceased its contract with external providers EMC, and appointed a Visitor Promotions Specialist to deliver the strategic objectives of the Visitor Strategy. The resourcing for this delivery model is currently 1 FTE and has an operational budget of \$230,000 (excluding salaries).

30 In-house delivery helps to minimise overhead costs, ensures a high level of elected member oversight and helps maintain the alignment of tourism and visitor objectives with Council's broader strategic aims and community outcomes. It also provides opportunities to coordinate with complementary Council activities including Communications, Parks and Recreation, and to utilise Council facilities such as Caroline Bay, district libraries and swimming pools, Southern Trust Event Centre, Aigantighe Art Gallery and the South Canterbury Museum.

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<sup>15</sup> Marlborough District Council had a population of 49,200 (2019 estimates: 2013 census) and a total tourism spend of over \$408 million in 2019 (MBIE).

<sup>16</sup> Marlborough has a targeted tourism rate with a budgeted revenue of \$208,000 for 2019/20. The rate is charged against short term rental and commercial rental accommodation and properties used for tourism activities.

- 31 Maintaining the status quo also has financial benefits, avoiding any restructuring and establishment costs involved with other options.
- 32 The cost of this option is estimated to be between \$230,000 – the current budget, and \$400,000 per annum– the increased budget recommended in the review undertaken by Visitor Solutions.
- 33 **Service delivery by existing Council Controlled Organisation (Aoraki Development):** Under this option Council would enter into an arrangement with Aoraki Development (AD) for the delivery of tourism and visitor promotions services. This would allow Council’s involvement with these services to remain high level, providing long-term strategic direction for the District and the provision of core infrastructure and services to support economic development including tourism.
- 34 AD is experienced and efficient in its delivery of economic development services. The industry networks and sector leadership established by AD could be effectively utilised to advance the actions and objectives of Council’s Visitor Strategy.
- 35 As a general proposition CCOs like AD have the capability to be more nimble in their delivery of services. This can be beneficial, particularly for activities like tourism, where external influences can have a swift and large impact on the whole sector. The narrow scope of activities undertaken by AD, compared with Council, means reduced pressure from competing priorities, ensuring a consistent focus on tourism and visitor promotions services within the framework of greater economic development.
- 36 While this option would reduce elected member oversight of the tourism and visitor promotions activity this would be mitigated through the development of AD’s Statement of Intent and reporting frameworks. This governance mechanism currently works well for economic development services provided by AD.
- 37 It is possible that because of AD’s well established focus on economic development, dating back to the removal of tourism and visitor promotions from this remit in 2015, that these activities may not receive the appropriate level of attention by the CCO. In the absence of a Statement of Intent including tourism and visitor promotion services there is also uncertainty about the cost of delivery. There is some risk of reduced levels of service due to AD not being able to deliver the same service for the same cost.
- 38 A further change to the delivery of tourism and visitor promotions services by Council following the changes in 2019 may cause the tourism sector to perceive a lack of clarity and strategic direction by Council on the optimal service delivery model. AD’s close connections with the tourism sector would help mitigate this.
- 39 There are implications for staff employment with this option which would need to be negotiated.
- 40 While the cost of this option has not been fully examined at this point, it is likely AD would be able to provide the same levels of service for the same budget as is currently allocated by Council.
- 41 **Service delivery by an external party:** This option could include service delivery by the Regional Tourism Operator, Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism. Council has a current service arrangement with Christchurch & Canterbury Tourism for the provision of international marketing. This arrangement could be extended to provide increased services.

- 42 This option may increase Timaru's visibility as a destination to a wider international and regional audience. However, it is possible that the promotion of the Timaru District would be inferior to that provided for the wider Canterbury region and Christchurch in particular. Local networks and knowledge may not be as well utilised under this option.
- 43 **Service delivery by a new Council Controlled Organisation:** This option would require the establishment of a new CCO. The main benefit of this option would be having an industry aligned organisation focused entirely on the delivery of Council's tourism and visitor promotions objectives. However, it is likely that the costs of establishing a new CCO would outweigh the benefits realised through this service delivery model.
- 44 **Complete a full service delivery review of tourism and visitor services:** This option would provide a more thorough assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of alternative service delivery models and could be completed as part of the development of the Long Term Plan 2021-31.

### Consultation

- 45 No consultation has been undertaken on this proposal to change the tourism and visitor promotions service delivery model to date.
- 46 Workshops were held with key tourism industry stakeholders as part of the development of the Timaru District Visitor Strategy in April 2019.
- 47 Council may wish to consider further consultation with stakeholders should significant changes to the levels of service or the cost of delivery for tourism and visitor promotions be decided.

### Relevant Legislation, Council Policy and Plans

- 48 *Local Government Act, Section 17A, Delivery of Services:* This section of the Act requires Council to review the cost effectiveness of current service delivery arrangements for meeting the needs of communities within its district for good-quality local infrastructure, local services and performance of regulatory functions. Reviews must be undertaken in conjunction with consideration for any significant change to relevant levels of service; within 2 years before the expiry of any contract or other binding agreement relating to the delivery of that infrastructure, service or regulatory function; and at such other times as the local authority considers desirable.
- 49 A review under section 17A must consider options for the governance, funding and delivery of infrastructure, services and regulatory functions including, but not limited to, the following options:
- 49.1 Responsibility for governance, funding and delivery is exercised by the local authority;
  - 49.2 Responsibility for governance and funding is exercised by the local authority, and responsibility for delivery is exercised by –
    - 49.2.1 A CCO of the local authority;
    - 49.2.2 A CCO in which the local authority is one of several shareholders;
    - 49.2.3 Another local authority; or
    - 49.2.4 Another person or agency.



- 49.3 Responsibility for governance and funding is delegated to a joint committee or other shared governance arrangement, and responsibility for delivery is exercised by an entity or person listed above.
- 50 The requirements of section 17A of the Local Government Act have been met through the consideration of these alternative service delivery options.
- 51 *Timaru District Visitor Strategy*: Detailed above. As a result of this discussion Council may wish to amend the Visitor Strategy to ensure it reflects any new service delivery model.

#### **Financial and Funding Implications**

- 52 Alternative funding options have not been fully considered in this report. It is envisaged that the budget for tourism and visitor promotions services would remain unchanged and the services however delivered will be done so, within the current budget.

#### **Attachments**

- 1. Timaru District Visitor Strategy - Adopted July 2019**
- 2. Timaru District Visitor Strategy - Implementation Plan**



# TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

JULY 2019



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## INFORMATION

Document Reference  
 Authors  
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# FOREWORD.

Timaru is an incredible district featuring some of the best New Zealand has to offer from the hustle of busy urban areas to epic alpine scenery.

The combination of international and domestic tourism is worth around \$220 million a year, but with a relatively low profile compared to other South Island destinations, the opportunities for this district to benefit from growing tourism numbers are huge.

Our accessible position in the middle of the South Island means that we're well connected, but often we're an important stop on the way to somewhere else. We need to be more focused about showing both domestic and international travellers why they should explore this district, and the fantastic things they'll be rewarded with when they do.

We created Aoraki Tourism to offer this important industry a support organisation solely focused on the promotion of Timaru District as a visitor destination. This will complement the work Timaru District Council and Aoraki Development are already doing within the district in regards to community and economic development.

The new strategy presented here offers a clear and pragmatic approach that will provide a solid foundation for destination marketing of the Timaru District. It is realistic in scope, focusing on enhancing the attributes the area already enjoys, rather than reinventing the wheel.

It's also about ensuring that we're better coordinated in our event planning, our tourism sector has better market information and advice and that we take an all of district approach in promoting events.

It highlights the key strengths of the district, outlines opportunities where Aoraki Tourism can be of real support to the sector and enables our team to confidently focus our marketing budgets to have the greatest impact.

In a world where people are always looking for the next authentic, Instagram-worthy and undiscovered experiences, Timaru District has the opportunity to share what it has with New Zealanders and the world, and this strategy is an important first step on that journey.

**DAMON ODEY**  
TIMARU DISTRICT MAYOR



TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY



# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Timaru District visitor strategy has been developed with input and guidance from the tourism sector<sup>1</sup> and Timaru District Council. The strategy has been established to guide the sector's development within the District over the next ten years. The strategy has been set out in a summarised way to align with sector requirements. It acknowledges and addresses past challenges and seeks to unlock future opportunities through a series of focused objectives, initiatives and actions, which align with the sector's values and vision.

## 1.1 OUR PRINCIPLES

The Timaru District's tourism sector has expressed the following guiding principles:

- **Respect for our environment and history** - to be both a good host and community member the sector must respect, protect and enhance the natural environment and built heritage.
- **Respect for our communities** - The tourism sector is dependent on the local community and stands to benefit from working respectfully with the community.
- **Quality partnerships and collaboration** - optimising the District's tourism sector can only be achieved through quality partnership and sector collaboration.
- **Quality visitor experiences** - our vision and objectives can only be achieved through the delivery of quality experiences.

## 1.2 OUR VISION

The Timaru District's tourism sector has expressed the following vision:

**“The District will view the growth of the tourism sector,  
the quality of its visitor experiences  
and the social and economic benefits it generates  
with pride”.**

<sup>1</sup> The strategy views the tourism sector very holistically and considers that it includes all business that serve domestic and international visitors and associated organisations that support business and economic development.



## TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

**1.3 TOURISM SECTOR PERSPECTIVES**

The District's tourism sector perceives that it faces a range of challenges and opportunities today and into the future. These are expressed in summary form as:

Current Perceived Challenges:

- A lack of effective sector **collaboration and leadership**, manifest via insufficient strategic planning and **direction** across all operational areas including marketing<sup>2</sup>.
- **Inadequate visitor infrastructure, facilities and services** across the District.

Perceived Future Challenges

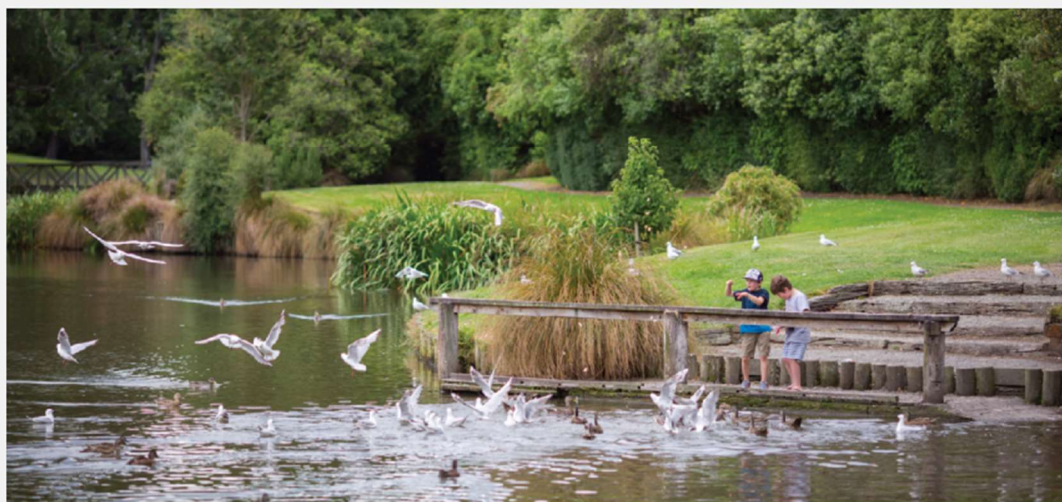
- Market constraints arising from **not having the necessary service infrastructure** in place.
- Inadequate sector **planning and strategic direction** across the District.
- Continued lack of sector **profile** and **status** locally and **poor marketing** to our potential core visitors.
- Continued inability to **collaborate, build meaningful partnerships** and to provide strong **leadership**.

Current Opportunities:

- The District has a **variety of attractions, facilities and activities** that range from Caroline Bay to Māori rock art and different outdoor recreation and sports activities. These combined offer 'something for everyone'.
- The **strategic location** of the District which is intersected by a number of key tourist / travel routes<sup>3</sup> and is equidistant from several large population centres.
- **Events** that attract and introduce visitors to the district.

Future Opportunities:

- An ability to implement a range of potential **visitor developments** that lead to **better-quality visitor experiences**.
- **Greater sector collaboration and stronger partnerships** due to **improved strategic planning and implementation**.
- A greater focus on **delivering quality visitor experiences**.
- A greater focus on **improving and developing quality new events**.
- As a growing destination for **boutique cruise ships**<sup>4</sup>.



<sup>2</sup> A lack of marketing focus is perceived to have led to an inadequate profile, status and image in the domestic and international market.

<sup>3</sup> Including Christchurch to Dunedin (State highway 1) and Christchurch to Mount Cook / Central Otago (State highway 79).

<sup>4</sup> Although a boutique and comparatively small market these ships are considered "the icing on the cake" rather than a foundation of the local tourism industry.



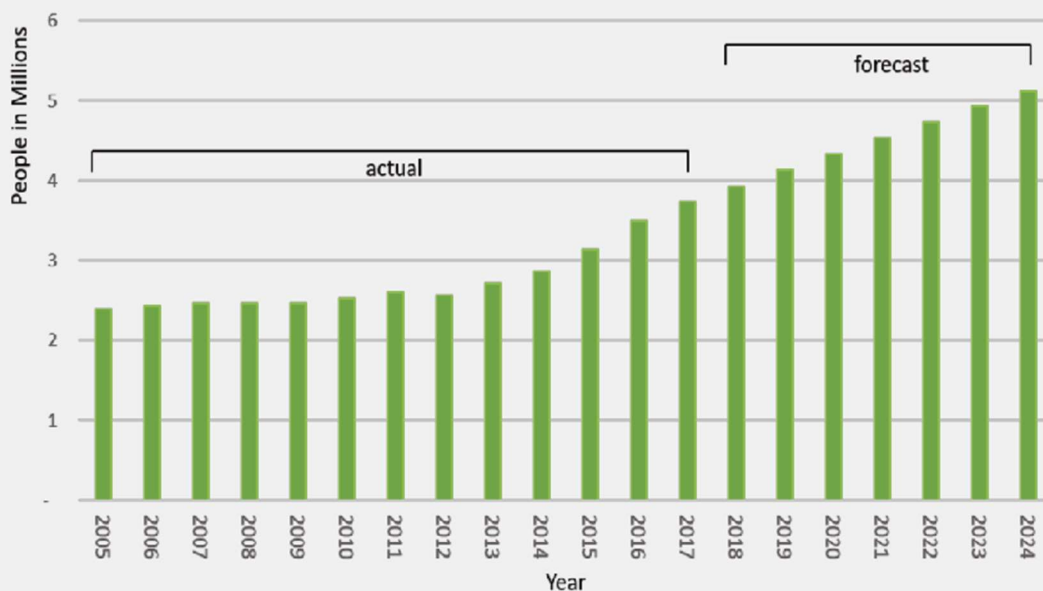
# 2. CONTEXT.

Before examining the Timaru District, it is important to understand the wider tourism context. Tourism is an important and growing sector of the New Zealand economy.

## 2.1 NATIONAL TOURISM SETTING

As is evident in Figure 2.1, international arrivals to New Zealand have illustrated sustained growth between 2005 and 2017 (increase of 57%), which is expected to continue through to 2024. The Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment are forecasting international arrivals to total over 4.8 million (a further 30% increase based on 2017 actuals<sup>5</sup>).

Figure 2.1: International Arrivals (actual and forecasted) from 2005-2024



Source: MBIE NZ tourism forecasts 2018-2024

New Zealand's economy reflects this growth, with the total international tourism spend in New Zealand showing an upward trend - both in actual and forecasted spend (as illustrated in Figure 2.2.). Between 2005 and 2017, international tourism spends increased by 52% with a total spend in excess of \$10.5 billion in 2017 alone. It is forecasted that the total international tourism spend will approach \$15 billion in 2025.<sup>5</sup>

In 2017, international tourism remained New Zealand's largest export earner, contributing 20.7% to total exports of goods and services, while international tourists generated \$1.5 billion in GST revenue.<sup>6</sup>

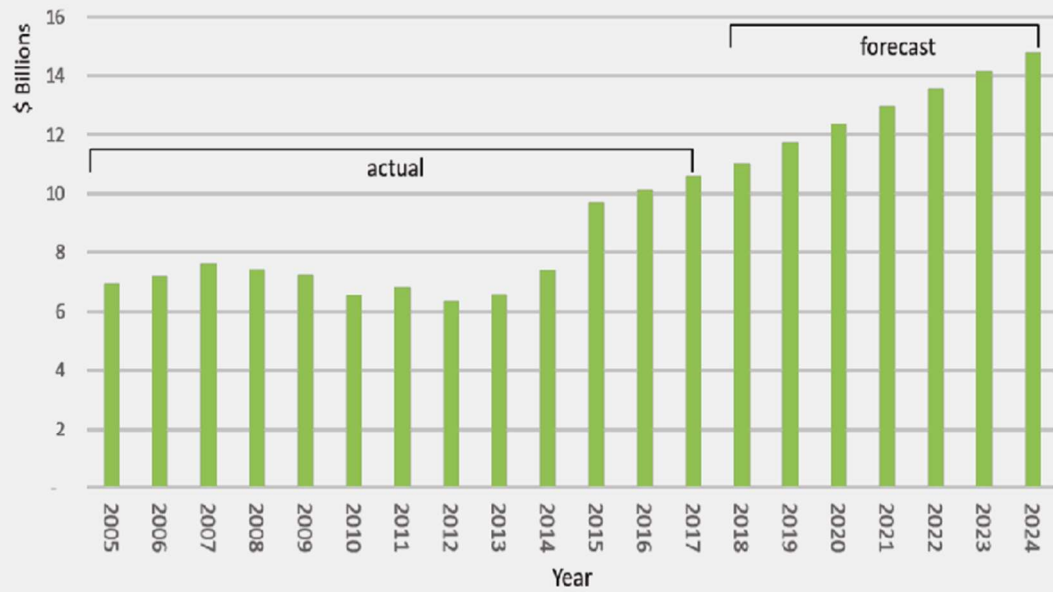
<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment: International Tourism Forecasts  
<sup>6</sup> Statistics New Zealand: Tourist Spend and Economic Return





TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

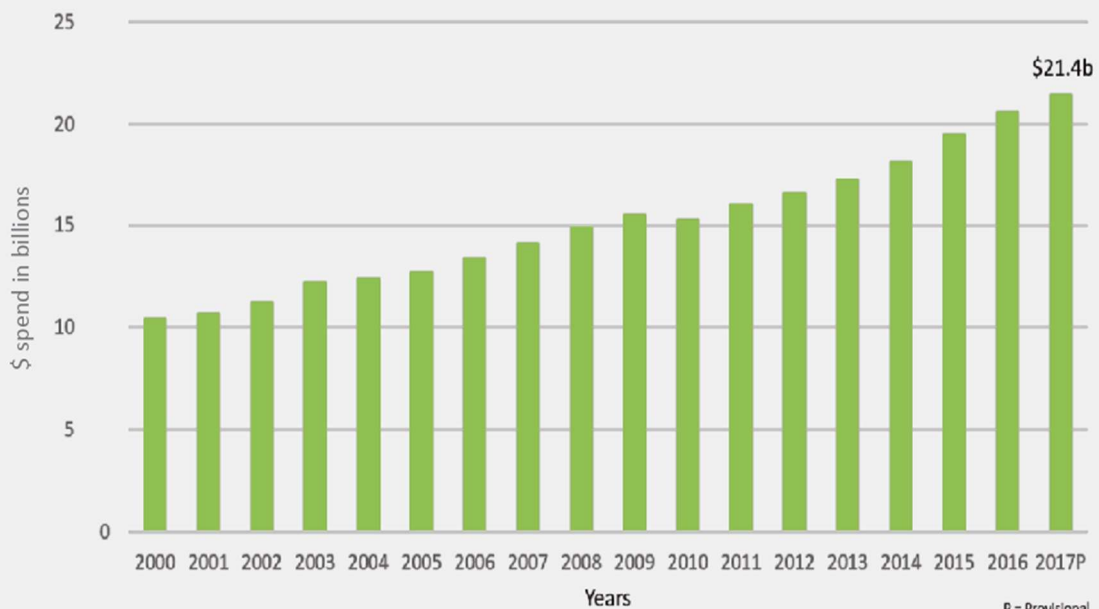
Figure 2.2 International Tourism Spend (actual and forecasted) from 2005-2024



Source: MBIE NZ tourism forecasts 2018-2024

Domestic tourism spend in New Zealand illustrates a similar upward trend (Figure 2.3). The growth and boom of domestic tourism has seen the spend increase by over 100% in the last 17 years, with \$21.4 billion spent in 2017.

Figure 2.3 Domestic Tourism Spend (actuals from 2000-2017)



P = Provisional

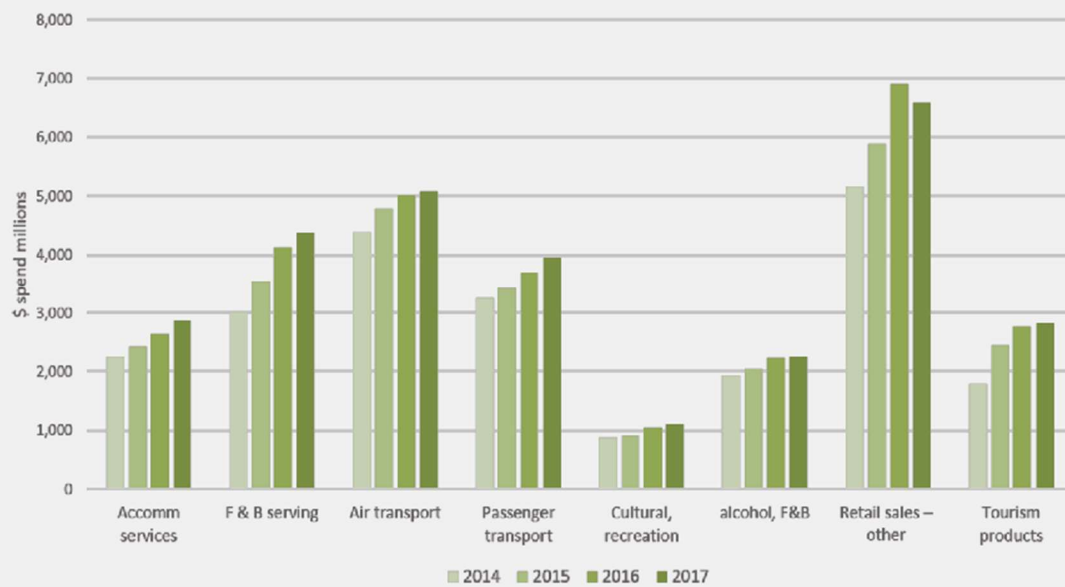
Source: Stats NZ



TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

When the total tourism spend is compartmentalised by product type, the majority of spend relates to retail sales, followed by air transport, food and beverage serving and accommodation. As is evident in Figure 2.4, the growth in each product type is proportionate to the total tourism spend. Aside from retail sales dropping in 2017, there are no significant increases or drops in spending behaviour/trends.

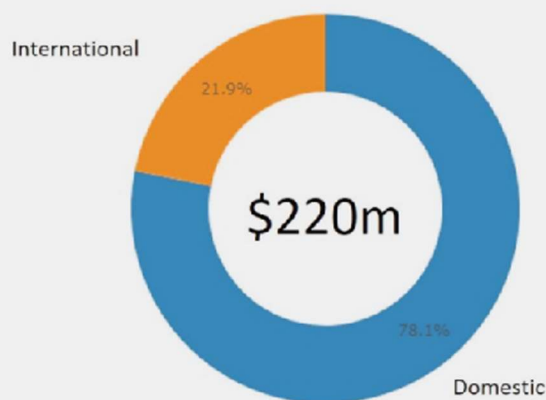
Figure 2.5 Tourism Spend by Product Type (actuals from 2014-2017)



2.2 TIMARU DISTRICT PROFILE

A combination of international and domestic tourism spend across the Timaru District totalled \$220 million during the 2017/18 financial year. This comprises of \$172 million (78%) from domestic spend and \$48 million (22%) from international spend (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6 International and Domestic Tourism Spend across the Timaru District (2017/18 Financial Year)

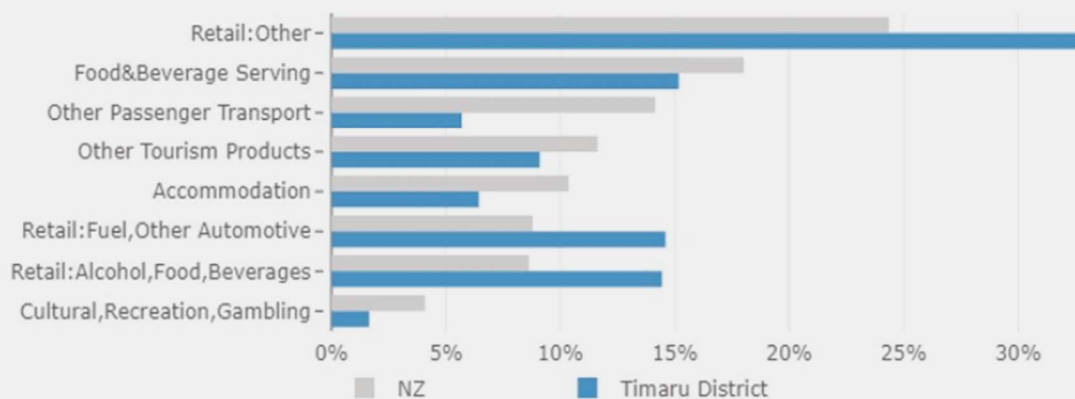


TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

When broken down by product type, retail spend was the highest category across the Timaru District (and considerably higher than all other commodities). Food and beverage serving, retail fuel/automotive and retail alcohol, food and beverage reached similar levels of spend.

Two significant disparities with national trends include the comparative lack of spend on accommodation and passenger transport across the District. Conversely the level of spend on retail fuel/automotive and retail alcohol, food and beverage are comparatively higher than national levels (Figure 2.7). What we can deduce from these data is that for many the Timaru District is primarily visited as part of a short stop (i.e. enroute to other locations)<sup>7</sup>, as opposed to being a destination in its own right.

Figure 2.7 Tourism Spend by Product Type across the Timaru District (2017/18 Financial Year)



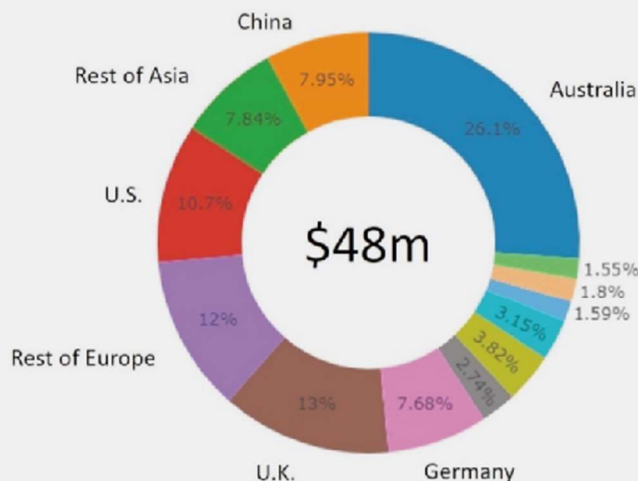
<sup>7</sup> Positioned on the coast of State Highway 1, the Timaru District is centrally located between the two largest cities in the South Island (Dunedin and Christchurch), while providing direct access to the traditional and highly frequented tourism destinations of the Central Lakes District and Mount Cook. This location places the District in a strong position to leverage from high traffic levels that travel through the area enroute to other destinations.



TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

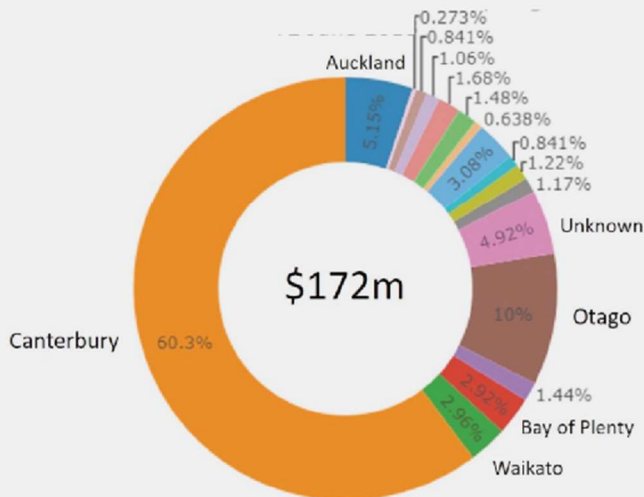
The international portion of spend can be attributed to Australia (26%), UK (13%), Europe (rest of) and America (11% respectively). The full breakdown by country of origin can be found in Figure 2.8.

Figure 2.8 Tourism Spend by Country of Origin - Timaru District (2017/18 Financial Year)



The domestic portion of spend can primarily be attributed to Canterbury (60%) and Otago (10%) and Auckland (5%). The remaining portion is divided across a multitude of areas across the country. The full provincial breakdown is shown in Figure 2.9.

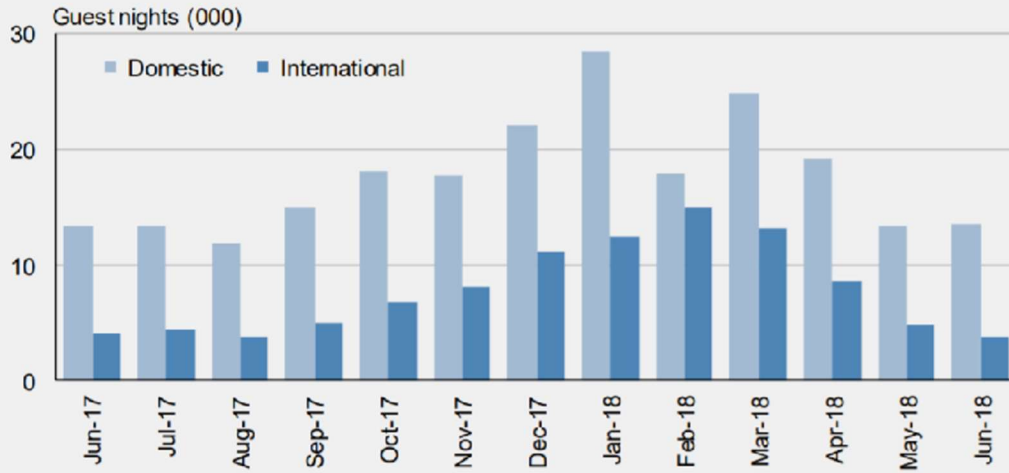
Figure 2.9 Tourism Spend by Province - Timaru District (2017/18 Financial Year)



TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY

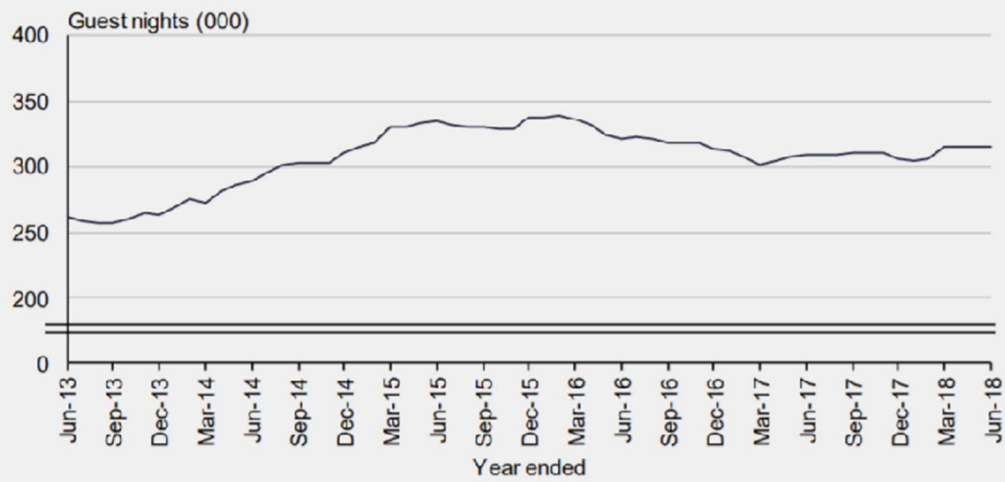
An examination of guest nights illustrates that the domestic market dominates (Figure 2.10), while overall annual guest nights to the District have declined and plateaued since 2016 (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.10: Timaru RTO Area Monthly Guest Nights by Origin of Guest.



Source: Stats NZ

Figure 2.11: Timaru RTO Area Annual Guest Nights



Source: Stats NZ



# 3. OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.



## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.1 ESTABLISHING STRONG LEADERSHIP.

#### CONTEXT

The District's tourism sector has outlined the importance it places on strong leadership, direction, advocacy and partnerships. It is perceived that these areas must be strengthened to capitalise on the district's tourism potential.

#### OBJECTIVE

1. Develop strong effective leadership that draws the different strands of the district's tourism sector together to deliver greater prosperity for all.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 1.1 Develop greater tourism resource within Timaru District Council to drive the implementation of the Visitor Strategy in partnership with the wider tourism sector.
- 1.2 Form a sector leadership group to work with Timaru District Council to strengthen collaboration and sector leadership.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 1.1.1 Appoint a 'Visitor Promotions Specialist' within Timaru District Council.
- 1.1.2 Involve the sector collaboratively in initiatives and seek to form partnerships to assist implementation wherever possible.
- 1.1.3 Report back to Council and the sector on initiatives and their outcomes.
- 1.2.1 Call for nominations and appoint a sector leadership group to provide guidance to Timaru District Council.

#### MEASURES

- 1.1.1.1 Appoint a 'Visitor Promotions Specialist' by the second half of 2019.
- 1.1.1.2 Establish a work plan for the 'Visitor Promotions Specialist' by the second half of 2019.
- 1.1.1.3 Meet work plan targets annually.
- 1.2.1.1 Appoint a sector leadership group by the end of June of 2020.
- 1.2.1.2 Initiate a meeting of the group in the second half of 2020 and agree an ongoing annual meeting schedule.



## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.2 INCREASE SECTOR COLLABORATION.

#### CONTEXT

Running parallel to strong leadership, the sector also outlined the importance it places on collaboration. It was considered that collaboration through joint strategy, planning and implementation would enable the district's current and future tourism opportunities to be unlocked.

#### OBJECTIVE

2. Improve collaboration across the Timaru district's tourism (and hospitality) sector to fully unlock economic and social opportunities.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 2.1 Establish collaborative approaches to the development of all visitor events and tourism related strategies, plans and marketing initiatives.
- 2.2 Form a sector leadership group to work with Timaru District Council to strengthen collaboration and sector leadership (As per 1.2).
- 2.3 Reduce the siloed outlook which has inadvertently evolved between some parts of the sector (due to geographic or activity type isolation).

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 2.1.1 Engage with and seek input from the sector early in the development of all visitor events and tourism related strategies, plans and marketing initiatives.
- 2.2.1 Call for nominations and appoint a sector leadership group to provide guidance to Timaru District Council (As per 1.2.1).<sup>9</sup>
- 2.2.2 Task Timaru District Council's 'Visitor Promotions Specialist' and the sector leadership group to develop engagement initiatives to bring the sector together. One of these initiatives could be an annual training workshop to enable individuals to share knowledge<sup>10</sup>.

#### MEASURES

- 2.1.1.1 Future processes can demonstrate early sector engagement.
- 2.2.1.1 Appoint a sector leadership group by the second half of 2020 (As per 1.2.1.1).
- 2.2.1.2 Initiate a meeting of the group in the second half of 2020 and agree on an ongoing annual meeting schedule (As per 1.2.1.2).
- 2.2.1.1 Develop and implement first sector engagement initiative by the end of 2019.
- 2.2.1.2 Implement at least two sector engagement initiatives annually.

<sup>9</sup> This group should be non-political and sector based.

<sup>10</sup> Because of the nature and scale of the District's tourism (and hospitality) sector many operators are small businesses with operational demands that do not always facilitate contact with others in the sector.





## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.3 OPTIMISE AND EXPAND OUR EVENTS.

#### CONTEXT

Events are an important part in the District's tourism sector<sup>11</sup>. They attract visitors from throughout the South Island and from further afield. The number and quality of events regionally and nationally is improving. Visitors are becoming more discerning about how they spend their time and money in relation to the events they attend. Other cities and districts are also improving their facilities and becoming more competitive<sup>12</sup>. It is important therefore that the Timaru District optimises its existing events, looks to develop new ones and adopts a more coordinated district-wide approach to event bidding, planning and delivery.

#### OBJECTIVE

3. Improve event opportunities and increase their economic benefit to the District.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 3.1 Improve the coordination and implementation of events within the District.
- 3.2 Lift the quality of the visitors' experience when they are in the District undertaking events.
- 3.3 Increase current and future visitors' event spending.
- 3.4 Maintain and develop our event facilities.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 3.1.1 Develop a simple District event plan which encourages innovation.
- 3.1.2 Consolidate all event planning into a single centrally run event calendar.
- 3.1.3 Issue a monthly event update email to the wider tourism sector (with a focus on accommodation providers and hospitality businesses).
- 3.2.1 Develop a welcome to the Timaru District information pack<sup>13</sup> (soft and hard copy).
- 3.2.2 Encourage event organisers to distribute the information pack electronically to all event participants when they register. Place hard copy packs at all accommodation providers and at events.
- 3.3.1 Establish a 'pop up'<sup>14</sup> event booth that can be set up at events promoting hospitality and activity opportunities available in the District.

<sup>11</sup> Events generate longer duration and overnight stays which assist with increasing visitor spend in the District.

<sup>12</sup> For example, in the area of sports events Christchurch has opened, is developing or planning numerous world class facilities that are likely to be attractive and price competitive.

<sup>13</sup> These information packs would market other opportunities that exist for the visitor when they are in the District and could be itinerary based (what to do if you have two hours free, a morning or a day). The hard copy can be a simple single sheet summary for those not literate on mobile devices.

<sup>14</sup> This pop-up event booth could be staffed or unstaffed depending on requirements.



- 3.3.2 Actively promote local hospitality opportunities to accommodation providers so that they can advise their guests.
- 3.4.3 Maintain and where feasible develop facilities that can be used for events.

**MEASURES**

- 3.1.1.1 Develop a simple District event plan by the end of June 2020.
- 3.1.2.1 Consolidate all event planning into a single centrally run event calendar.
- 3.1.3.1 By the third quarter of 2020 issue monthly event update emails to the wider tourism sector.
- 3.2.1.1 Develop a welcome to the Timaru District information pack and distribute by mid-2020.
- 3.3.1.1 By the end of 2020 establish and activate (at all significant events) a 'pop up' event booth.
- 3.4.1.1 By the first quarter of 2020 actively promote local hospitality opportunities to accommodation providers so that they can advise their guests.
- 3.5.1.1 Facilities are maintained to a good standard suitable for events.



## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.4 GROW OUR DOMESTIC VISITOR NUMBERS.

#### CONTEXT

For many local visitor businesses, the domestic market is their lifeblood. Most current visitors to the District are domestic. Of the \$220 million spent in the District approximately 80% is generated from domestic visitors (60% from Canterbury and 10% Otago)<sup>15</sup>. These regions are both our closest markets and potentially our most frequent source of repeat visitors. Despite this for many visitors the District is only a short stop on the way to another destination. Many still pass through without fully understanding the experiences the District can offer.

Internationally significant money is spent on marketing South Island attractions and destinations to international visitors. It is hard for the Timaru District to compete with this level of spend and have any form of marketing impact. The District can however intercept international visitors as they pass through without the need for expensive targeted marketing campaigns.

Focusing resources towards growing domestic visitation will generate greater benefits and indirectly make the District more attractive to international visitors.

#### OBJECTIVE

4. Increase the District's domestic visitor numbers, bed nights and spend rates.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 4.1 Target all marketing expenditure<sup>16</sup> towards attracting greater domestic visitation<sup>17</sup> and increasing visitor spend.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 4.1.1 Create and implement a digital marketing strategy encompassing web<sup>18</sup> and social media platforms<sup>19</sup>.
- 4.1.2 Create and implement targeted marketing campaigns through a variety of distribution channels<sup>20</sup>.
- 4.1.3 Engage with and encourage the District's tourism sector to participation in coordinated marketing initiatives (such as social media initiatives).

#### MEASURES

- 4.1.1.1 Develop and begin implementing the digital marketing strategy by the start of November 2019.
- 4.1.2.1 Develop and begin implementing the targeted marketing campaign by the start of November 2019.
- 4.1.3.1 Demonstrate sector participation in coordinated marketing initiatives

<sup>15</sup> Spend year ending June 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Outside of a small contribution made to 'ChristchurchNZ' promoting the region internationally.

<sup>17</sup> In particular from Christchurch and Dunedin (and Wellington via virtue of direct plane flights).

<sup>18</sup> Utilising the Aoraki Tourism Website.

<sup>19</sup> Emphasis should be placed on marketing the attractions that we have to the key market segments that are most aligned to those attractions. This may involve directing visitors to certain geographic areas that most align to their specific areas of interest.

<sup>20</sup> Consideration should be given to leveraging of the visiting friends and relatives (VFR) market.



## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.5 OPTIMISE OUR VISITOR HUBS.

#### CONTEXT

The District's current visitor service and facility infrastructure has the potential to be optimised to better meet the needs and expectations of visitors. This is especially true in the main service locations and visitor hubs. The District has many landscapes and built environments that have not been fully realised as visitor destinations, for example Caroline Bay and the Timaru CBD. The local community and visitors alike stand to gain better experiences if improvements occur.

#### OBJECTIVE

5. Improve the quality of our main visitor hubs<sup>21</sup> so that they deliver a better visitor experience and generate more revenue for the District.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 5.1 Explore ways the District's main visitor intercept hubs (such as Geraldine) can be optimised to deliver a better quality of visitor experience and generate greater economic benefits.
- 5.2 Examine how Caroline Bay can be optimised to deliver a better quality of visitor experience and generate greater economic benefits.
- 5.3 Encourage the expansion and increased range and quality of accommodation types offered in Timaru.
- 5.4 Lift the quality of the visitor experience offered in the Timaru CBD.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 5.1.1 Establish local sector working groups in key intercept hubs to identify opportunities that can be cost effectively implemented in partnership with Council.<sup>22</sup>
- 5.2.1 Establish a sector working group to explore Caroline Bay opportunities<sup>23</sup> in partnership with Council and the wider community.
- 5.2.2 Implement changes as appropriate.
- 5.3.1 Actively encourage investment in the accommodation sector.
- 5.4.1 Work with CBD business owners, sector representatives and Council to develop and implement an optimisation plan<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> A 'visitor hub' is any localised area that attracts visitors either as a destination or a service / transit point. Some of these will be 'micro hubs'.

<sup>22</sup> Depending on requirements this group could be the 'sector leadership group' or a subcommittee (rather than an entirely new group).

<sup>23</sup> These opportunities should range from immediate small changes that could be implemented quickly to longer term infrastructural changes.

<sup>24</sup> This could be undertaken as part of the City Hub Strategy or alternatively as a more focused tourism initiative.



**MEASURES**

- 5.1.1.1 Establish local sector working groups in 2020.
- 5.1.1.2 Implement a viable trial project in one location by 2020.
- 5.2.1.1 Establish a sector working group in 2020.
- 5.3.1.1 To be actively approaching potential investors / operators by 2020.
- 5.4.1.1 To have completed an optimisation plan by 2020.



## OBJECTIVES, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.

### 3.6 IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE.

#### CONTEXT

Visitors travel to seek experiences. The quality of the experiences they receive in turn influences factors such as their likelihood of returning, their willingness to recommend a destination or attractions to others and how much money they spend. The visitors' experience is influenced by a diversity of quality factors such as customer service, food, the physical environment, activities, events and accommodation. It is in the tourism sector's best interest to ensure every visitor's experience is a good one.

#### OBJECTIVE

6. That visitors to the District receive the best quality experiences possible.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

- 6.1 Encourage the sector to train and mentor staff and volunteers to deliver high standards of customer service.
- 6.2 Support the promotion of visitor businesses that consistently deliver quality experiences.
- 6.3 Support initiatives to improve the quality of the built and natural environments in areas frequented by visitors.

#### STRATEGIC ACTIONS

- 6.1.1 Deliver workshops and presentations to ensure the sector fully understands the benefits of delivering quality visitor experiences.
- 6.1.2 Facilitate the sector's awareness of available training opportunities.
- 6.2.1 Showcase local businesses and events that consistently deliver quality visitor experiences<sup>25</sup>.
- 6.3.1 In key locations support the development of visitor infrastructure and/ or initiatives that protect or improve the quality natural or built environments.

#### MEASURES

- 6.1.1.1 Run a minimum of one workshop or presentation by June 2020.
- 6.1.1.2 Disseminate information on available training opportunities annually.
- 6.1.2.1 Evaluate and (if warranted) showcase annually local businesses and events with high service quality standards<sup>25</sup>.
- 6.3.1.1 Implement and publicise a minimum of one initiative annually.

<sup>25</sup> This could be in partnership with organisations running existing business awards



TIMARU DISTRICT VISITOR STRATEGY



# 4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN.

\_\_\_\_\_

An implementation plan will be finalised after the draft plan is finalised.





## 3.1 ESTABLISHING STRONG LEADERSHIP

## 3.2 INCREASE SECTOR COLLABORATION

### Strategic actions achieved:

- Visitor Promotions Specialist appointed July 2019.
- Joint landing page launched for welovetimaru.nz with Aoraki Development (AD) in September 2019. The landing page acts as a funnel, ensuring people with any interest in Timaru District get the information they want quickly and easily. It also means we can both leverage off the current signage in place throughout Timaru District.
- AD and Aoraki Tourism (AT) are launching a joint LinkedIn profile under the We Love Timaru brand, in the first quarter of 2020. The objective is to put the District in front of a professional domestic audience, and event and conference planners. LinkedIn members generally have a high level of discretionary income compared to other channels.
- In order to target more conference and event visitors we are creating a new section on the AT website showcasing our venues and accommodation. AD have conducted a survey of accommodation, AT is to do the same for venues and private accommodation, add to website. Promote via LinkedIn.
- Timaru District's on-line presence reinforces the 'pleasant stop over' image. We have been working with Go Geraldine to rewrite the on-line narrative across multiple websites, and provide up to date imagery.
- We've worked with Chris Thomas from Special Events Aoraki on an E.O.I for an event, this also involved the Chamber and AD. We are also investigating the viability of a new event with Chris.
- We are working with PrimePort, AD, and the Timaru Information Centre to welcome cruise ship passengers this summer. We are also working with PrimePort to create a digital presence for Timaru as a cruise destination on the AT and Tourism New Zealand websites.
- An email database has been compiled for updates.
- Engaged the sector for input in the development of new marketing material - November 2019.

### Next steps:

Call for nominations and appoint a sector leadership group to provide guidance to Timaru District Council early in 2020. Initiate first meeting of the group. Investigate tourism projects that could be funded by Provincial Growth Fund, or Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

### 3.3 OPTIMISE AND EXPAND OUR EVENTS

#### Strategic actions achieved:

- We are investigating the potential for a new event with Chris Thomas of Special Events Aoraki, and targeting event and conference planners via LinkedIn with AD.
- We're reminding people that if they enter their events into Eventfinda, the events get pulled into multiple other on-line sites, and we will promote their events for free.
- Events are advertised each week in summary on Facebook, Instagram, and the Timaru Herald.

#### Next steps:

Develop a simple District event plan by end of June 2020.

Start monthly mailchimp email for upcoming events and hospitality opportunities in Feb 2020. Mailchimp database is already established, need to keep adding subscribers. Add newsletter subscription functionality to the website.

Develop a welcome to Timaru info pack and distribute by mid 2020.

Encourage event organisers to distribute the information pack electronically to all event participants when they register. Place hard copy packs at all accommodation providers and events.

Establish a 'pop-up' event booth ready to be used at the Rock and Hop March 19 -22. Have been offered a 3x3 or 6x3 space as part of TDC sponsorship.

Maintain and where feasible develop facilities that can be used for events.

### 3.4 GROW OUR DOMESTIC VISITOR NUMBERS

#### Strategic actions achieved:

##### Website:

- The website has been restructured for better user experience segmented by visitor interest type: Foodies - Art, Culture, Heritage - Walk, Swim, Bike - Shopping - Family Fun - Outdoor and Adventure - Wildlife
- We are regularly adding fresh content in the form of blogs and building new sections, i.e. cruise, conference.
- Google Ads campaign started December 2019. Increase budget 2020.
- Search engine optimisation (SEO) is improving, we are currently getting 30% of traffic via organic search, 30% via social media and 30% via paid search.

##### Social media:

- Launched Insider's Guide in July on Facebook and Instagram.
- We are using Facebook and Instagram to target domestic visitors and FITs.
- We have set up Pinterest to target international travelers at the planning stage of travel.
- We have been running weekly paid campaigns on Facebook, Instagram and the audience network, targeting people in a geographic area from Christchurch to Dunedin as per the strategy.
- We've been collaborating with the tourism sector via interviews for our 'Insider Guide', and for giveaways.

##### Print:

- We have a weekly ad in the Timaru Herald to raise awareness of local activities and events to visitors and locals.
- Collaborated with ChchNZ for editorial in Kia Ora Magazine and NZ Herald.
- Advertised editorial content two page spreads in Metropol (December 2019) and Avenues (January 2020) in Christchurch, and a one page spread in Regional News Wellington (December 2019)

#### Next steps:

##### Campaigns:

We are going to launch two major campaigns each year, summer and winter, using a variety of print and on-line channels. Under those two major campaigns will be multiple smaller ones that line up with important dates such as events, school holidays, long weekends etc.

##### Social Media:

By the first quarter 2020 we will incorporate our Pinterest channel more fully into our content marketing.

Set up LinkedIn first quarter 2020.

##### Marketing material:

Print and distribute new map handout January 2020.

Create smaller download-able brochures to have on website first quarter 2020.

Research and produce DL Brochure first quarter 2020.

##### Signage:

Redesign signage. Investigate using transponders on billboards at north and south end of Timaru.

### 3.5 OPTIMISE OUR VISITOR HUBS

#### Strategic actions achieved:

- We are currently supporting the Caroline Bay Playground Upgrade Project Committee with communications, and brand development.

#### Next steps:

Look into projects that we can apply for funding for. This could be a sector leadership project, or we could work with local sector groups. Have had initial discussion with Go Geraldine and Michael Barker, will initiate meeting in February 2020 to discuss further.

Establish a sector working group to explore Caroline Bay opportunities in partnership with Council and the wider community.

Actively encourage investment in the accommodation sector.

Work with CBD business owners, sector representatives and Council to develop and implement an optimisation plan. This could be undertaken as part of the City Hub strategy or as a more focused tourism initiative.

### 3.6 IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

#### Next steps:

Deliver workshops and presentations to ensure the sector fully understands the benefits of delivering quality visitor experiences by June 2020. Meet with Go Geraldine and AD to potentially relaunch their online training program. Look into famils for accommodation providers, and information centres.

Facilitate the sector's awareness of available training opportunities.

Showcase local businesses and events that consistently deliver quality visitor experiences.

In key locations support the development of visitor infrastructure and/or initiatives that protect or improve the quality natural or built environments.