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Item No. 3

Halifax Regional Council
March 25, 2008

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Brad Anguish, Director, Business Planning & Information Mgt

DATE: March 20, 2008

SUBJECT: HRM Visitor Information

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

To inform Council that Business Planning and Information Management and the Board of Destination Halifax have agreed to form a joint working group to bring forward a “next generation” strategy for the delivery of Visitors Services in HRM.

BACKGROUND

The current program is delivered primarily via a pre amalgamation structure. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Visitor Services has been undergoing a internal review to ensure the needs of the community and visitors to HRM are being well served. The review of the current program has highlighted some issues in terms of operating arrangements, locations, the use of technology and a need to consider the “next generation” of Visitors Services in HRM.

A working group has been established to facilitate a comprehensive and collaborative team to ascertain the best model for the delivery of Visitor Information in HRM. The team will include staff members from HRM Visitor Services, representation from the Destination Halifax staff and board, and key stakeholders within various community and industry associations.

Destination Halifax and HRM Visitor Services have many areas of shared interest in relation to the delivery of Visitor Information within HRM. Increased collaboration and cooperation between the two organizations will ensure information services offered to visitors to HRM are consistent with emerging requirements within the tourism sector.

The objective of the review will be to ensure HRM has a model for Visitor Information which is affordable, integrated across all channels, consistent with HRM's Integrated Contact Strategy, builds upon the promotion of HRM being the Atlantic Gateway, and meets the needs of visitors and communities.

DISCUSSION

For the upcoming year staff will be developing a report to Council with recommendations regarding Visitor Information for 2009.

Staff from HRM and Destination Halifax will begin meeting in April to discuss the review process and next steps.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/ BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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