

Dear Tourism Operator

I am extremely happy to report that the full City Council on 20th October unanimously agreed and voted to support the tabled recommendations below:

- 1) That Council agrees that a TIC for Hereford is absolutely necessary to support the visitor and tourist economy.**
- 2) That the Finance and Policy Committee be tasked with identifying appropriate funds to be used to support a start-up in 2016-2017, and to use reserves or underspent resources in the revenue budget in 2015-2016 if expenditure towards the project is necessary during the current year.**
- 3) That the Finance and Policy Committee reviews projected revenues generated by the TIC when further data is available and incorporates these into forward planning for budgets in subsequent years, with the intention that the TIC will not be supported from reserves for more than one year.**

I would have to say I am really heartened with Council's response. I feel the debate and the decision that followed reveals that sense of pride and duty of leadership that is growing in our present City Council, and a trait which the first Queen Elizabeth recognised and rewarded with our " Cap of Maintenance ", the mark of an Exemplar Council.

It is a challenge, and yes there is much work to be done before it becomes a reality, but the foundation is now laid.

The reality is that enthusiasm of necessity must be measured by financial support, with cash from all stake holding supporters and partners, with a qualified and enthusiastic officer leading the many volunteers, already willing and waiting in the wings, all working together with that singular aim and purpose of establishing an effective and thriving customer facing centre of excellence that will be the Hereford Tourist Information Centre.

Enthusiasm without commitment is that cup half empty.....dreadful!

We need that cup half full, ...ready to spill over and spread like ripples on a pond, until it reaches every corner of the land.

We have a wonderful City nestling in an outstandingly beautiful County.

We are a magnet to would be admirers, £510 million pounds of tourist spending in 2011 says it very adequately, but it could be twice that figure.

We do not suffer from the degradation of urban density, we have but a small population, but oh so rich in talent and accomplishment. We punch far above our weight in almost every field of endeavour so why not proclaim it to the whole nation,

We certainly seek to do it with our quest to be nominated the City of Culture in a few years' time, how better from the centre of our exuberant City, from a dedicated throbbing heart.

I am immensely proud of my City, so honoured to be its Mayor!. In this mayoral year I have seen such beauty, such achievement, such talent and dedication in so many fields of endeavour. I feel sometimes so overwhelmed with pride and admiration that I feel my heart will burst!

We have so much to offer, but we hide our light under a bushel.

I want to liberate that light, let it shine like a beacon, unmistakably recognised with the symbol TIC as the destination for information and direction for everyone fortunate to visit or pass our way. Nothing less than a dedicated Hereford Tourist Centre will suffice.

The City Council is prepared to do its part. Will you help? Will you be committed? Will you contribute financially to the project, however small or large, for that is what commitment really means, and what will make it happen.

Dare I thank you in anticipation.

Most sincerely,

Cllr Charles Nicholls

Right Worshipful, The Mayor of Hereford