



Department for
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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

20 July 2022

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Dear Meg,

Government Response to the Independent Review of Destination Management Organisations in England

I am writing to draw your attention to today's publication of the government's response to the independent review of Destination Management Organisations (DMO) undertaken by Nick de Bois (Chair of VisitEngland's Advisory Board).

The DMO review was published in September 2021. Nick took a bold and comprehensive approach to his review which has allowed us to think more boldly about the future of the visitor economy and the role of the DMOs within that.

The purpose of the DMO review was to bring coherence and structure to England's DMO landscape. The purpose of the government's response is to configure a way that DMOs can maximise their impact and review the role they have to play in supporting the growth of regional tourism.

The DMO Review makes 12 recommendations in total, six of which are directed at the Government, four at DMOs themselves, and one each for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Local Authorities (LAs). The response agrees with all six of the recommendations directed at DMOs, LEPs and LAs. Of those recommendations directed at the Government, the Response sets out why the Government agrees with three of these, and partially or disagrees with the remaining three.

The response agrees to the government creating a new structured system for England's DMOs whereby DMOs that successfully meet clear requirements will become part of a 'national portfolio' of accredited *Local Visitor Economy Partnerships*. We are proposing to change the name of DMOs to Local Visitor Economy Partnerships to capture the role and purpose of these organisations more clearly. VisitEngland will be given the responsibility to design and assess the criteria for becoming an accredited *Local Visitor Economy Partnerships* with instruction from my officials at DCMS.



Initially, we will pilot the proposed tiered model, including provision of multi-year funding, in one region of England. We have chosen to pilot it in a first instance, as the current complex and fragmented nature of the DMO landscape means that not all parts of the country are ready to take on public funding. Time is needed to sort this, and the creation of a national portfolio will help. Additionally, the de Bois review notes that 'robust quantifiable evidence on DMO impact is lacking'. This makes it hard to be confident that the provision of taxpayer funding will yield a strong return on investment.

I am happy to discuss this work with you and your committee if desired. Our formal response to the DMO review will provide more clarity to the industry and mould the landscape in England for the next few years.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Huddleston', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nigel Huddleston MP
Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society